MARVEL
THE UNCANNY
X-MEN
TM
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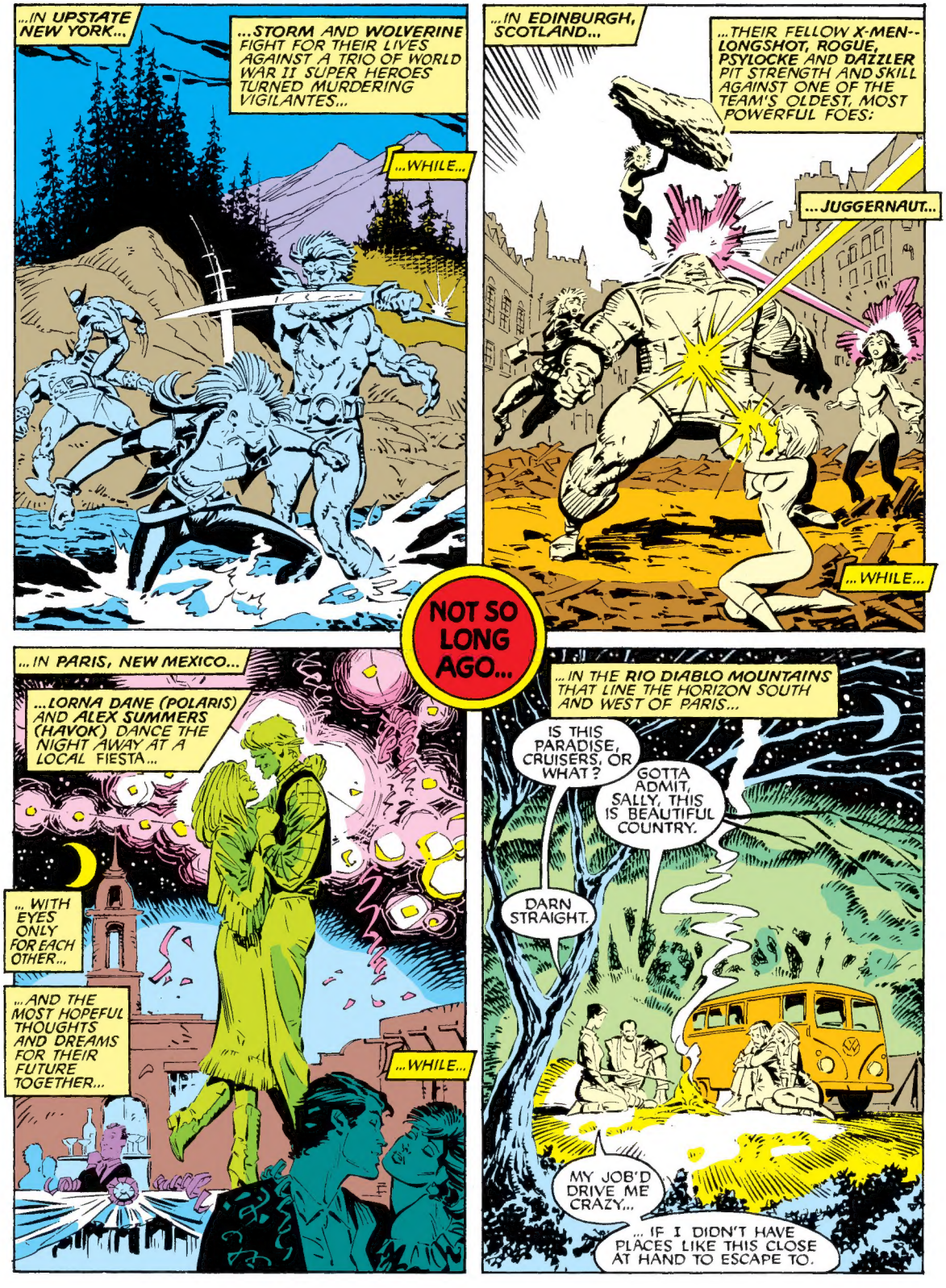
AUG
02461
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY
the BROOD
IS BACK!
SILVESTRI + DG



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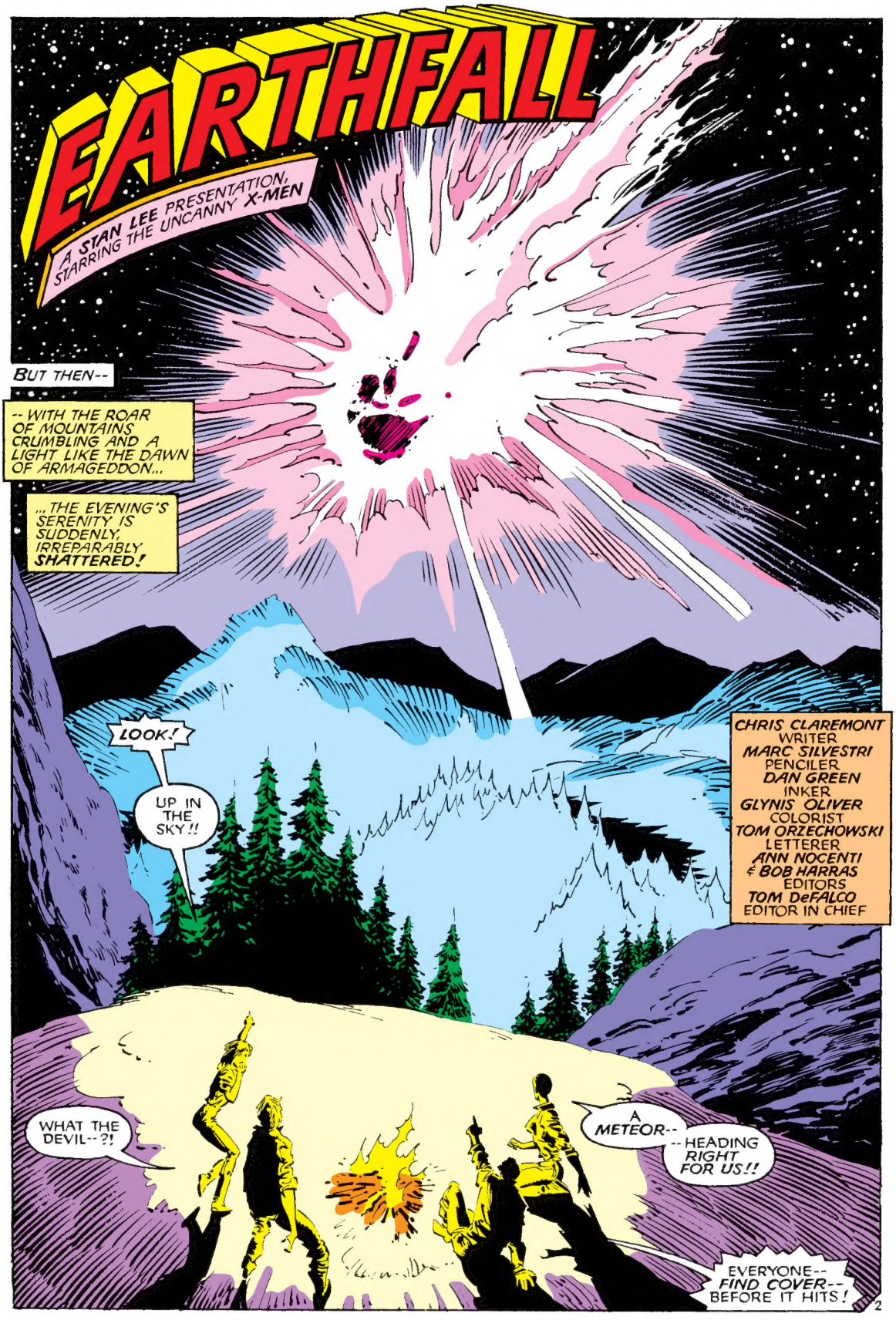
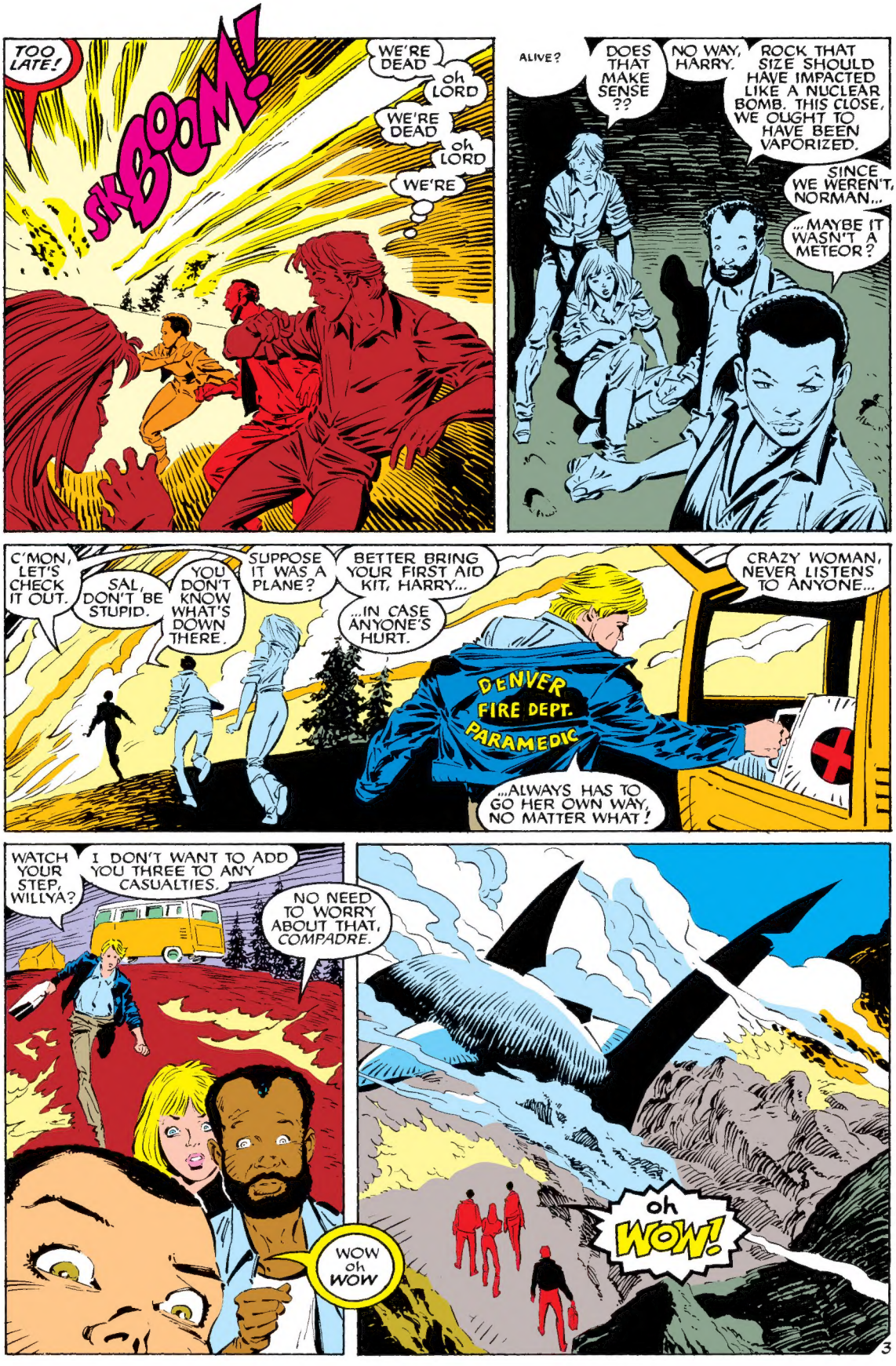
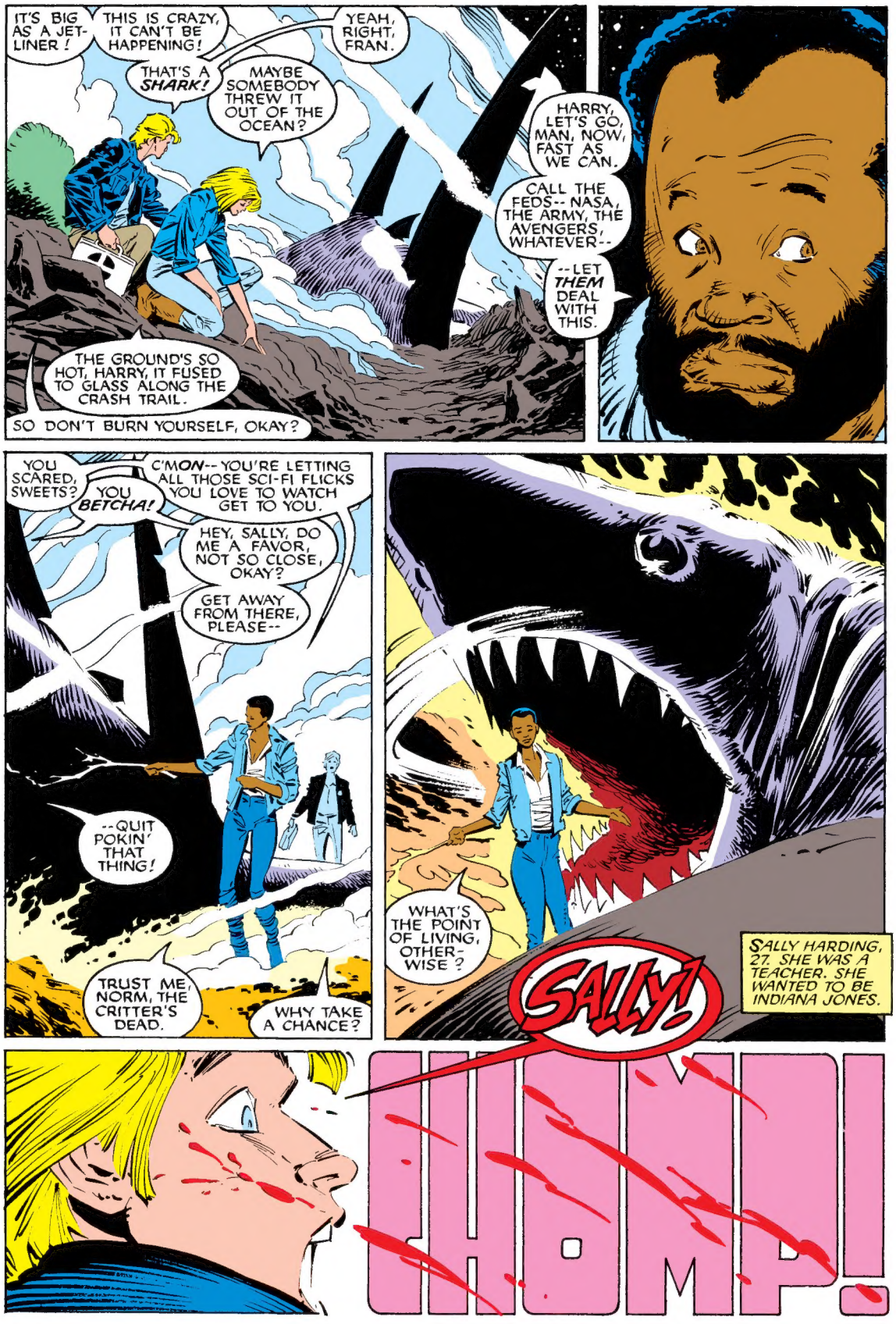
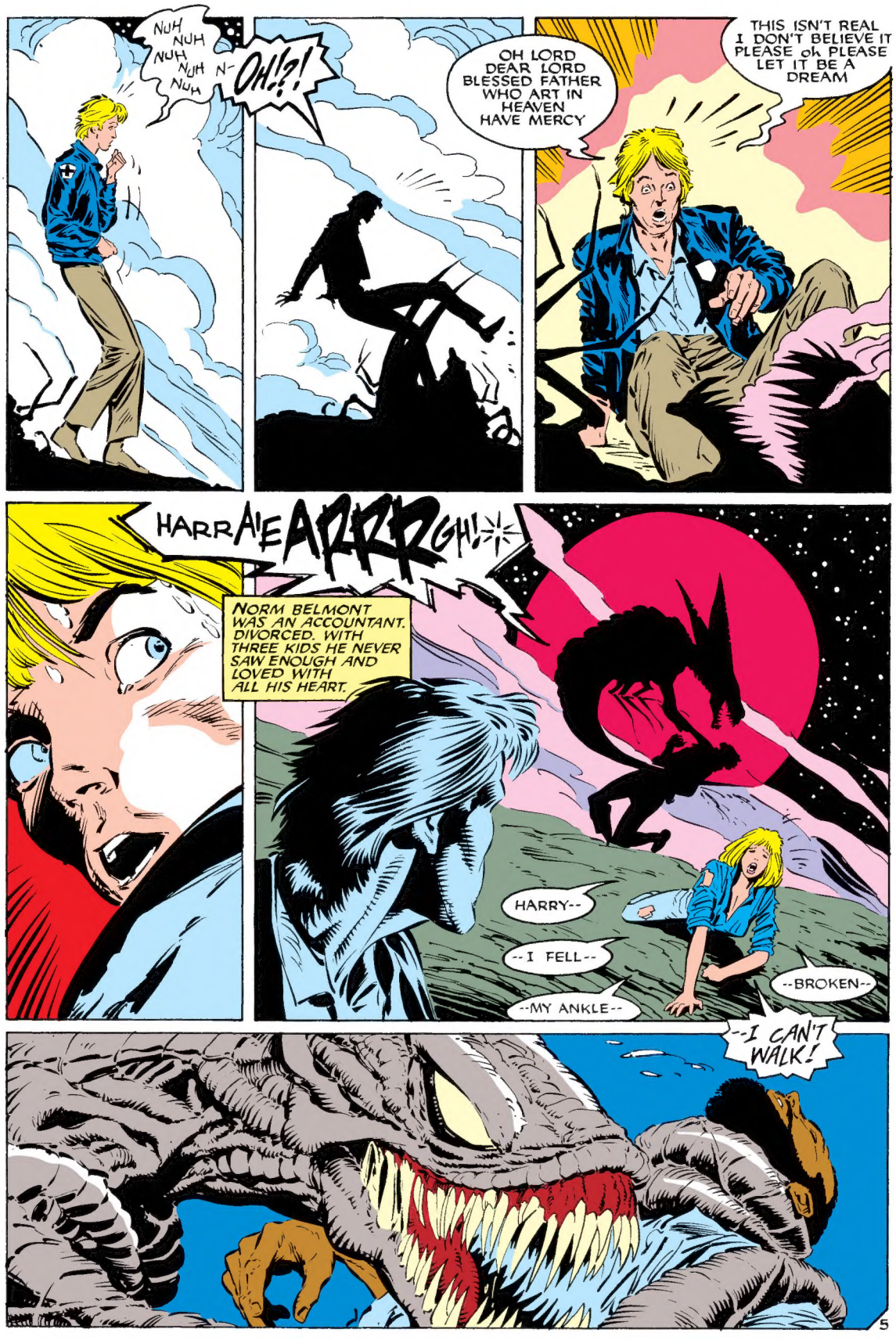

EARTHFALL
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION, STARRING THE UNCANNY X-MEN
BUT THEN--
-- WITH THE ROAR OF MOUNTAINS CRUMBLING AND A LIGHT LIKE THE DAWN OF ARMAGEDDON...
... THE EVENING'S SERENITY IS SUDDENLY, IRREPARABLY SHATTERED!
LOOK!
UP IN THE SKY!!
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
MARC SILVESTRI PENCILER
DAN GREEN INKER
GLYNIS OLIVER COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER
ANN NOCENTI & BOB HARRAS EDITORS
TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!
A METEOR--
--HEADING RIGHT FOR US!!
EVERYONE-- FIND COVER-- BEFORE IT HITS!

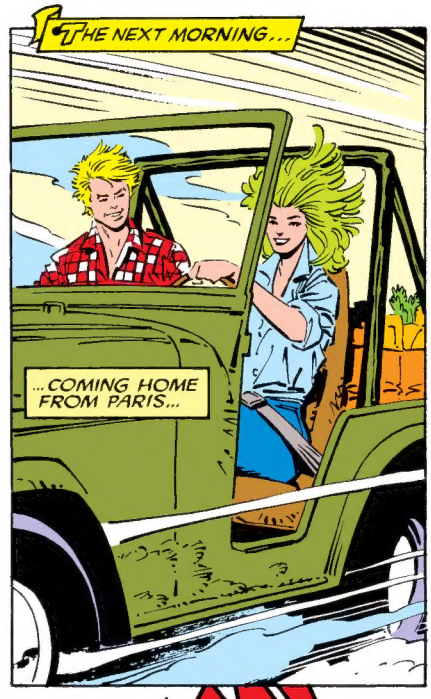

TOO LATE!
SKBOOM!
WE'RE DEAD
oh LORD
WE'RE DEAD
oh LORD
WE'RE
ALIVE?
DOES THAT MAKE SENSE ??
NO WAY, HARRY.
ROCK THAT SIZE SHOULD HAVE IMPACTED LIKE A NUCLEAR BOMB. THIS CLOSE, WE OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN VAPORIZED.
SINCE WE WEREN'T, NORMAN...
...MAYBE IT WASN'T A METEOR?
C'MON, LET'S CHECK IT OUT.
SAL, DON'T BE STUPID.
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S DOWN THERE.
SUPPOSE IT WAS A PLANE?
BETTER BRING YOUR FIRST AID KIT, HARRY...
...IN CASE ANYONE'S HURT.
DENVER FIRE DEPT. PARAMEDIC
CRAZY WOMAN, NEVER LISTENS TO ANYONE...
...ALWAYS HAS TO GO HER OWN WAY, NO MATTER WHAT!
WATCH YOUR STEP, WILLYA?
I DON'T WANT TO ADD YOU THREE TO ANY CASUALTIES.
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT, COMPADRE.
WOW oh WOW
oh WOW!


IT'S BIG AS A JET-LINER!
THIS IS CRAZY, IT CAN'T BE HAPPENING!
YEAH, RIGHT, FRAN.
THAT'S A SHARK!
MAYBE SOMEBODY THREW IT OUT OF THE OCEAN?
HARRY, LET'S GO, MAN, NOW, FAST AS WE CAN.
CALL THE FEDS-- NASA, THE ARMY, THE AVENGERS, WHATEVER--
--LET THEM DEAL WITH THIS.
THE GROUND'S SO HOT, HARRY, IT FUSED TO GLASS ALONG THE CRASH TRAIL.
SO DON'T BURN YOURSELF, OKAY?
YOU SCARED, SWEETS?
YOU BETCHA!
C'MON-- YOU'RE LETTING ALL THOSE SCI-FI FLICKS YOU LOVE TO WATCH GET TO YOU.
HEY, SALLY, DO ME A FAVOR, NOT SO CLOSE, OKAY?
GET AWAY FROM THERE, PLEASE--
--QUIT POKIN' THAT THING!
TRUST ME, NORM, THE CRITTER'S DEAD.
WHY TAKE A CHANCE?
WHAT'S THE POINT OF LIVING, OTHER-WISE?
SALLY!
SALLY HARDING, 27. SHE WAS A TEACHER. SHE WANTED TO BE INDIANA JONES.
HOMP!

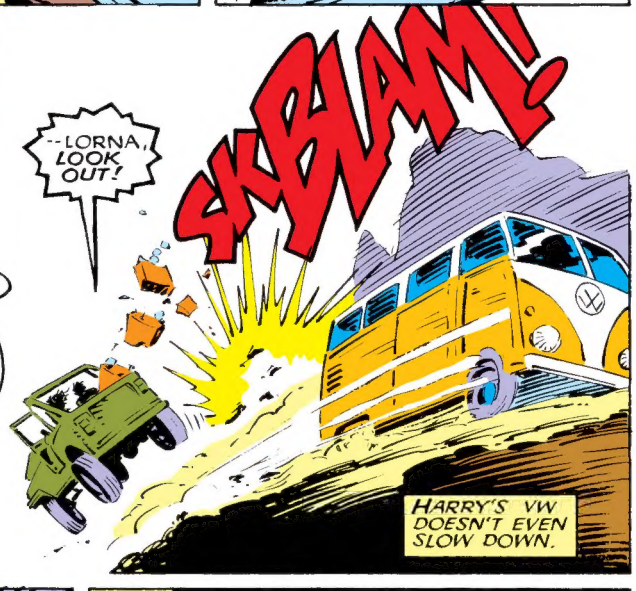

NUH NUH NUH NUH NUH N-
OH!?!
OH LORD DEAR LORD BLESSED FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN HAVE MERCY
THIS ISN'T REAL I DON'T BELIEVE IT PLEASE oh PLEASE LET IT BE A DREAM
HARRAIEARRRGH!
NORM BELMONT WAS AN ACCOUNTANT. DIVORCED. WITH THREE KIDS HE NEVER SAW ENOUGH AND LOVED WITH ALL HIS HEART.
HARRY--
--I FELL--
--MY ANKLE--
--BROKEN--
--I CAN'T WALK!

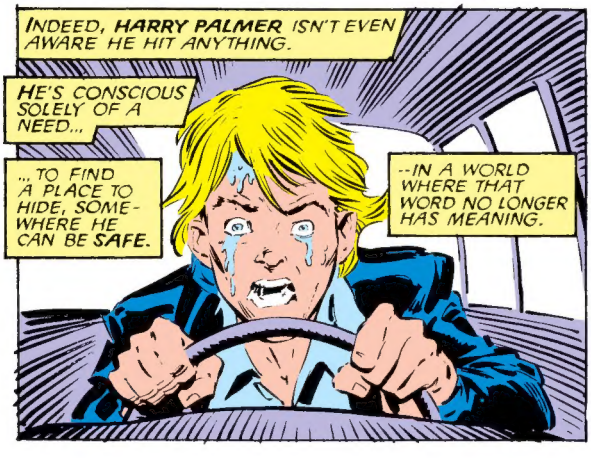
FRAN MORROW.
FOR PITY'S SAKE--
--HELP ME!

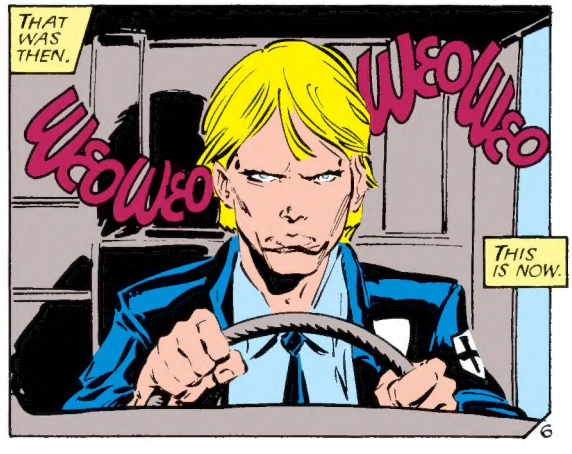
SANG SOLO IN THE CHURCH CHOIR. THAT'S WHERE THEY MET.
HE PRAYS FOR HER SCREAMS TO STOP...
...AND HOWLS INSIDE WHEN THEY DO.

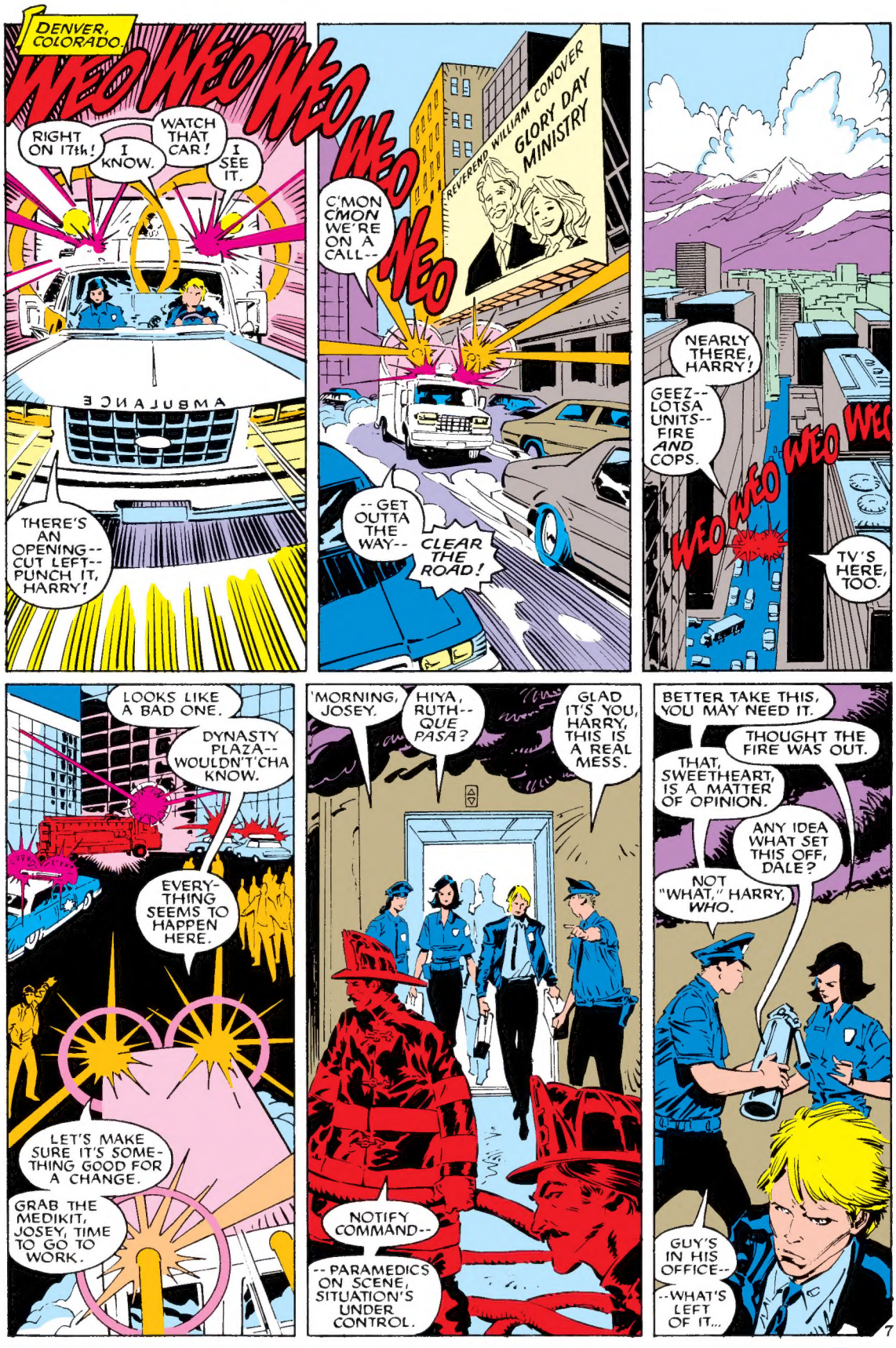

THE NEXT MORNING...
...COMING HOME FROM PARIS...

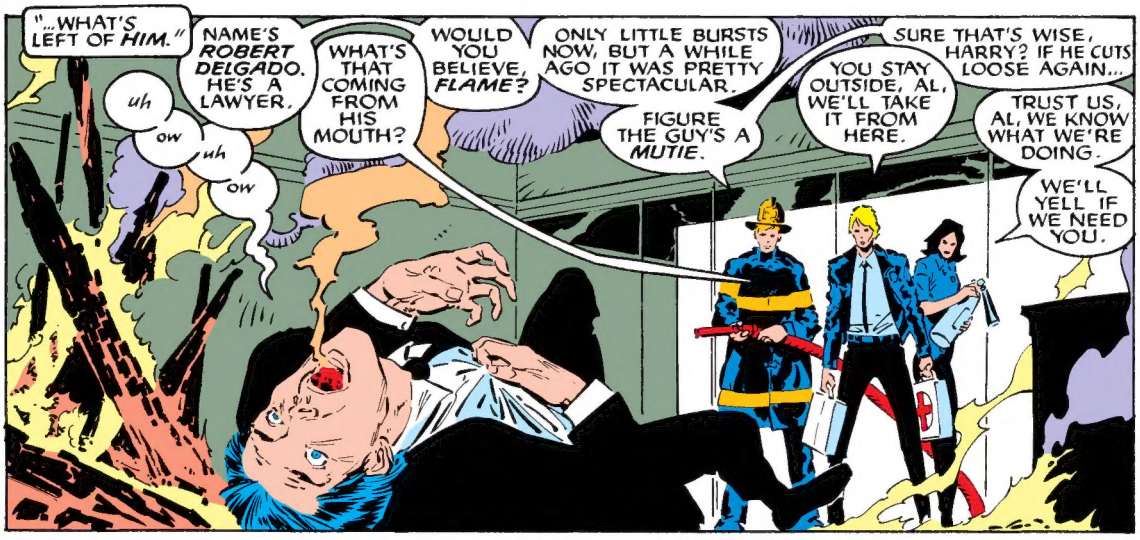
SHREEEEEEEEEEEE
HOLY--?!
IS THAT CLOWN DRUNK OR CRAZY OR--?


--LORNA, LOOK OUT!
SKBLAM!
HARRY'S VW DOESN'T EVEN SLOW DOWN.

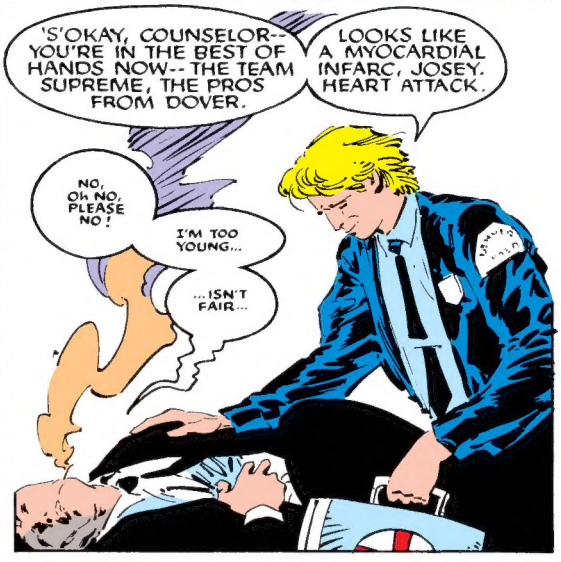

INDEED, HARRY PALMER ISN'T EVEN AWARE HE HIT ANYTHING.
HE'S CONSCIOUS SOLELY OF A NEED...
...TO FIND A PLACE TO HIDE, SOMEWHERE HE CAN BE SAFE.
--IN A WORLD WHERE THAT WORD NO LONGER HAS MEANING.

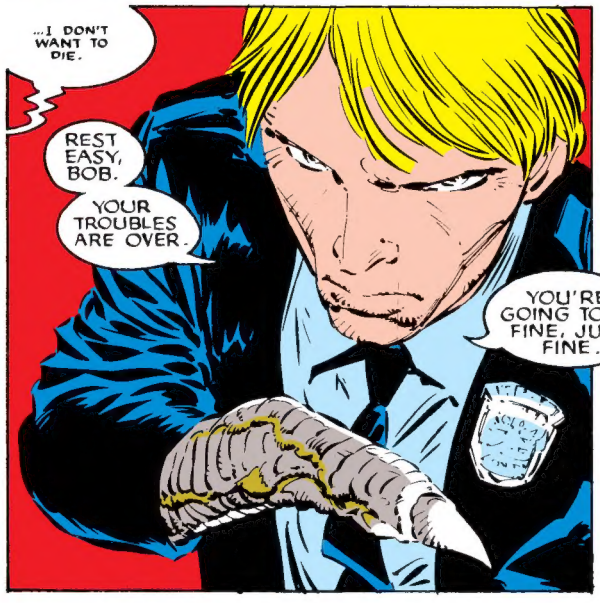

THAT WAS THEN.
WEOWEO
WEOWEO
THIS IS NOW.


DENVER, COLORADO.
WEO WEO WEO
RIGHT ON 17th!
I KNOW.
WATCH THAT CAR!
I SEE IT.
AMBULANCE
THERE'S AN OPENING-- CUT LEFT-- PUNCH IT, HARRY!
WEO WEO
REVEREND WILLIAM CONOVER
GLORY DAY MINISTRY
C'MON C'MON WE'RE ON A CALL--
-- GET OUTTA THE WAY--
CLEAR THE ROAD!
NEARLY THERE, HARRY!
GEEZ-- LOTSA UNITS-- FIRE AND COPS.
WEO WEO WEO
TV'S HERE, TOO.
LOOKS LIKE A BAD ONE.
DYNASTY PLAZA-- WOULDN'T'CHA KNOW.
EVERY-THING SEEMS TO HAPPEN HERE.
LET'S MAKE SURE IT'S SOME-THING GOOD FOR A CHANGE.
GRAB THE MEDIKIT, JOSEY, TIME TO GO TO WORK.
'MORNING, JOSEY.
HIYA, RUTH-- QUE PASA?
GLAD IT'S YOU, HARRY, THIS IS A REAL MESS.
NOTIFY COMMAND--
-- PARAMEDICS ON SCENE, SITUATION'S UNDER CONTROL.
BETTER TAKE THIS, YOU MAY NEED IT.
THOUGHT THE FIRE WAS OUT.
THAT, SWEETHEART, IS A MATTER OF OPINION.
ANY IDEA WHAT SET THIS OFF, DALE?
NOT "WHAT," HARRY, WHO.
GUY'S IN HIS OFFICE--
--WHAT'S LEFT OF IT...

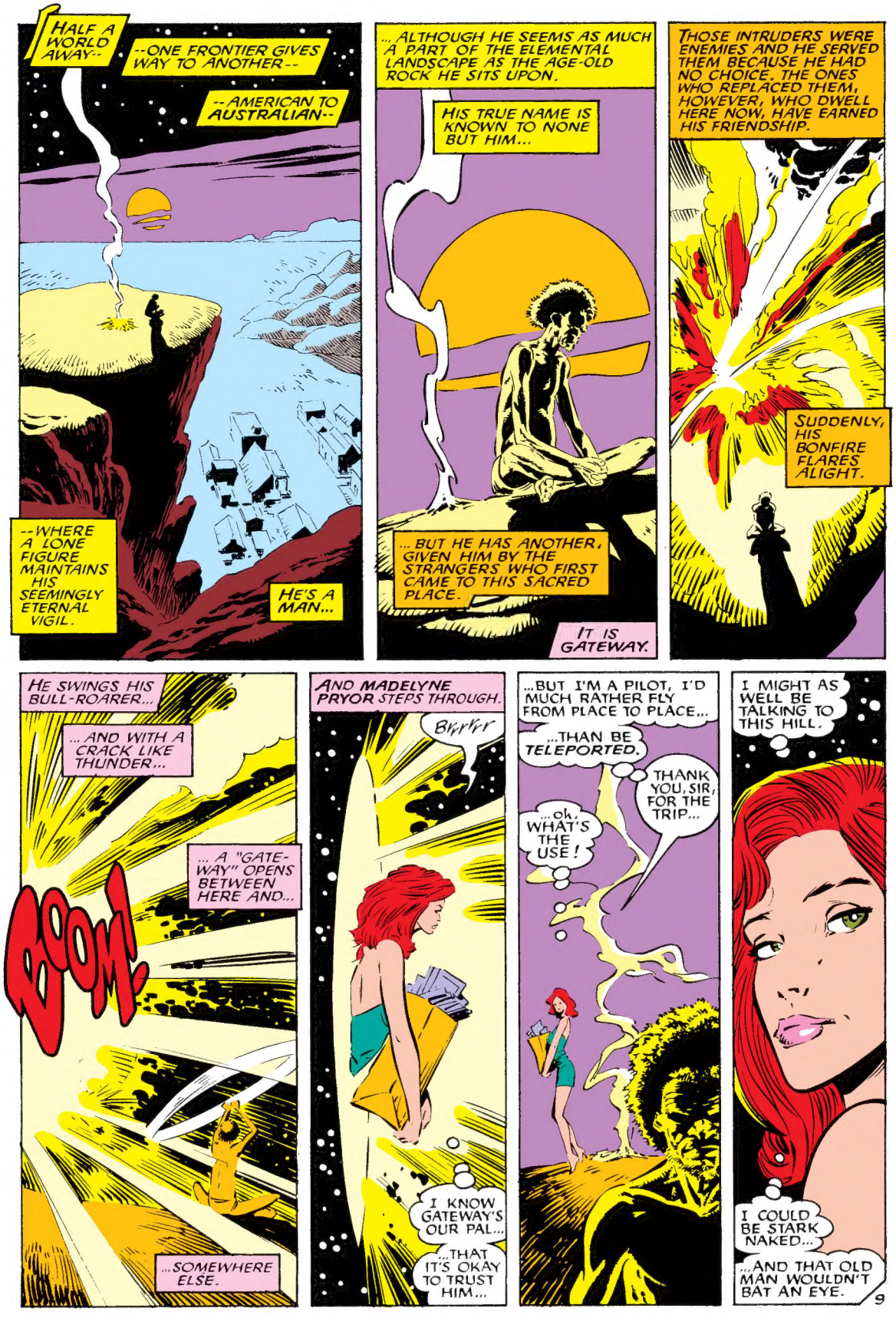

"...WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM."
NAME'S ROBERT DELGADO. HE'S A LAWYER.
uh
ow
uh
ow
WHAT'S THAT COMING FROM HIS MOUTH?
WOULD YOU BELIEVE, FLAME?
ONLY LITTLE BURSTS NOW, BUT A WHILE AGO IT WAS PRETTY SPECTACULAR.
FIGURE THE GUY'S A MUTIE.
SURE THAT'S WISE, HARRY? IF HE CUTS LOOSE AGAIN...
YOU STAY OUTSIDE, AL, WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
TRUST US, AL, WE KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING.
WE'LL YELL IF WE NEED YOU.

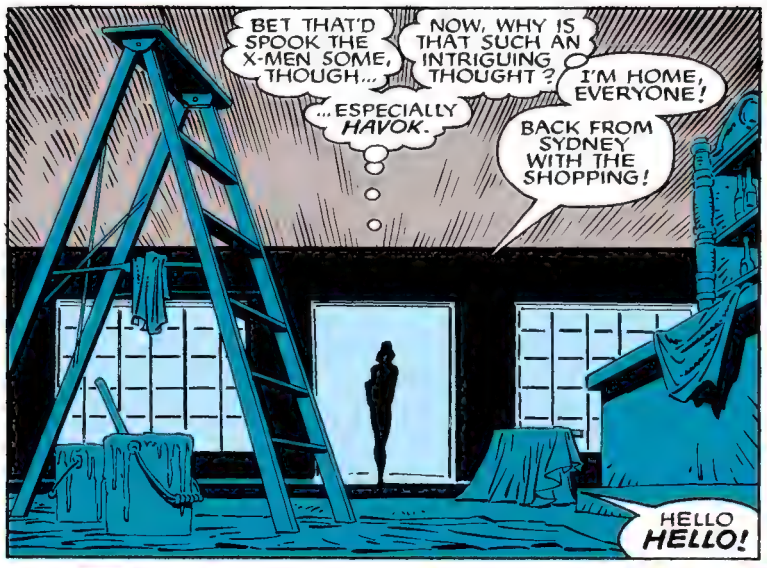
HELP...
...PLEASE... HELP ME...
...CAN'T BREATHE...
...HURTS...
...DIDN'T MEAN... START FIRE...
...COULDN'T STOP MYSELF...
...SO MUCH PAIN... SO SUDDEN...


'S'OKAY, COUNSELOR-- YOU'RE IN THE BEST OF HANDS NOW-- THE TEAM SUPREME, THE PROS FROM DOVER.
LOOKS LIKE A MYOCARDIAL INFARC, JOSEY. HEART ATTACK.
NO, OH NO, PLEASE NO!
I'M TOO YOUNG...
...ISN'T FAIR...

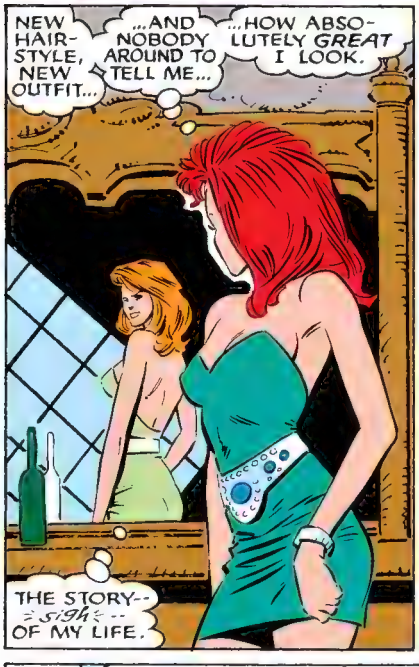

...I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
REST EASY, BOB.
YOUR TROUBLES ARE OVER.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE FINE, JUST FINE.

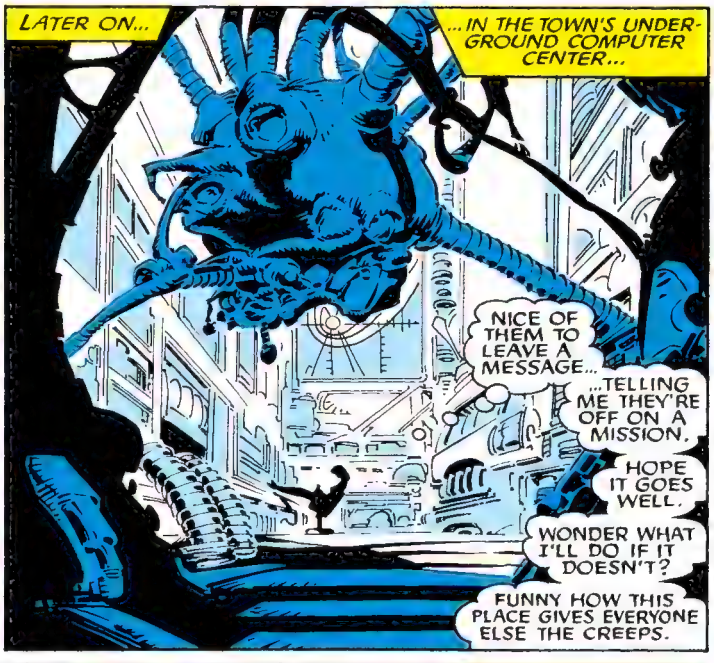
IN FACT, I CAN PRETTY MUCH GUARANTEE...
...THAT YOU'LL LIVE FOREVER!

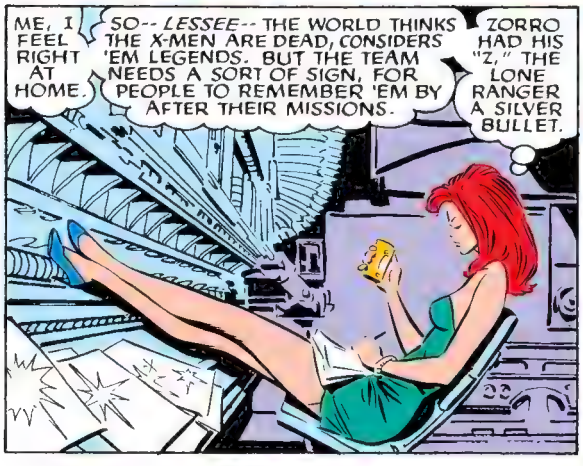

HALF A WORLD AWAY--
--ONE FRONTIER GIVES WAY TO ANOTHER--
--AMERICAN TO AUSTRALIAN--
--WHERE A LONE FIGURE MAINTAINS HIS SEEMINGLY ETERNAL VIGIL.
HE'S A MAN...
... ALTHOUGH HE SEEMS AS MUCH A PART OF THE ELEMENTAL LANDSCAPE AS THE AGE-OLD ROCK HE SITS UPON.
HIS TRUE NAME IS KNOWN TO NONE BUT HIM...
... BUT HE HAS ANOTHER, GIVEN HIM BY THE STRANGERS WHO FIRST CAME TO THIS SACRED PLACE.
IT IS GATEWAY.
THOSE INTRUDERS WERE ENEMIES AND HE SERVED THEM BECAUSE HE HAD NO CHOICE. THE ONES WHO REPLACED THEM, HOWEVER, WHO DWELL HERE NOW, HAVE EARNED HIS FRIENDSHIP.
SUDDENLY, HIS BONFIRE FLARES ALIGHT.
HE SWINGS HIS BULL-ROARER...
... AND WITH A CRACK LIKE THUNDER...
... A "GATE-WAY" OPENS BETWEEN HERE AND...
BOOM!
...SOMEWHERE ELSE.
AND MADELYNE PRYOR STEPS THROUGH.
Brrrrr
I KNOW GATEWAY'S OUR PAL...
...THAT IT'S OKAY TO TRUST HIM...
...BUT I'M A PILOT, I'D MUCH RATHER FLY FROM PLACE TO PLACE...
...THAN BE TELEPORTED.
...oh, WHAT'S THE USE!
THANK YOU, SIR, FOR THE TRIP...
I MIGHT AS WELL BE TALKING TO THIS HILL.
I COULD BE STARK NAKED...
...AND THAT OLD MAN WOULDN'T BAT AN EYE.

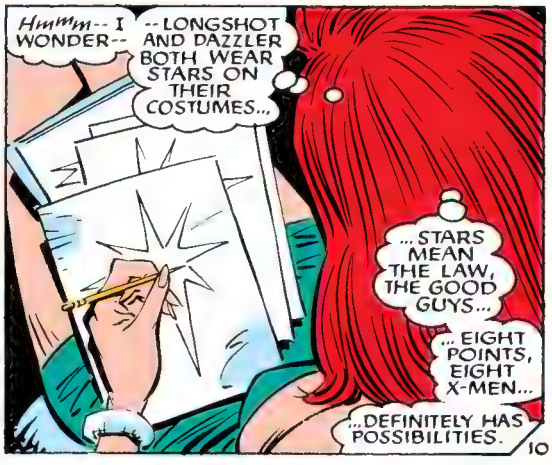

BET THAT'D SPOOK THE X-MEN SOME, THOUGH...
NOW, WHY IS THAT SUCH AN INTRIGUING THOUGHT?
...ESPECIALLY HAVOK.
I'M HOME, EVERYONE!
BACK FROM SYDNEY WITH THE SHOPPING!
HELLO HELLO!

NO ANSWER.
PROBABLY NO X-MEN, EITHER.
TYPICAL.

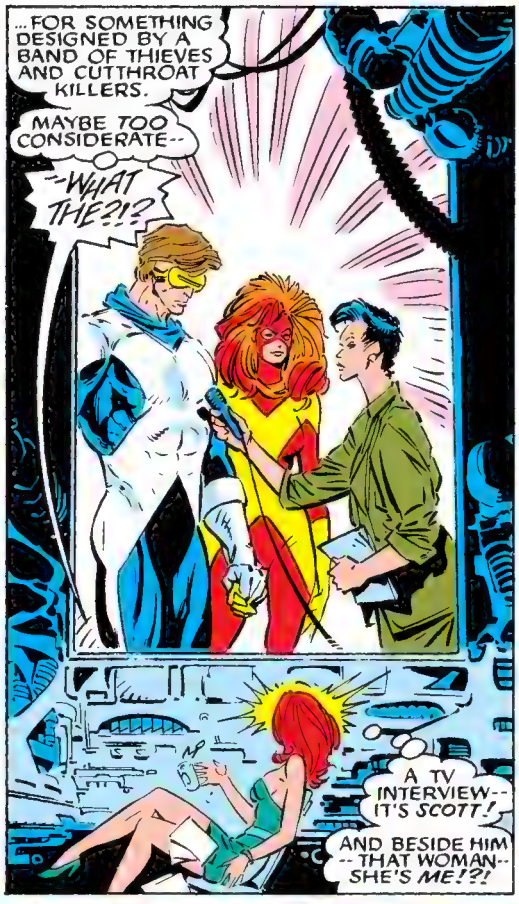

NEW HAIR-STYLE, NEW OUTFIT...
...AND NOBODY AROUND TO TELL ME...
...HOW ABSO-LUTELY GREAT I LOOK.
THE STORY-- -sigh- -- OF MY LIFE.

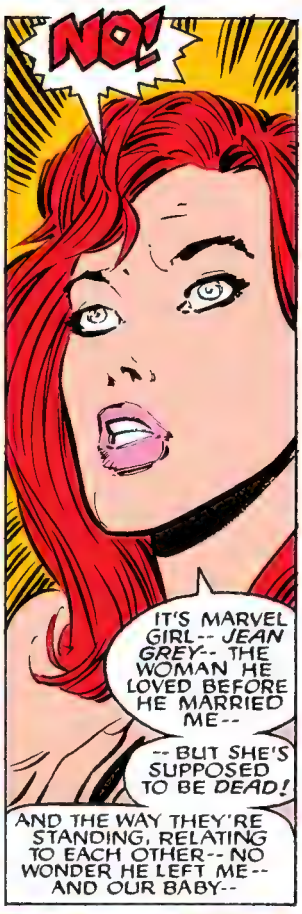

LATER ON...
...IN THE TOWN'S UNDER-GROUND COMPUTER CENTER...
NICE OF THEM TO LEAVE A MESSAGE...
...TELLING ME THEY'RE OFF ON A MISSION.
HOPE IT GOES WELL.
WONDER WHAT I'LL DO IF IT DOESN'T?
FUNNY HOW THIS PLACE GIVES EVERYONE ELSE THE CREEPS.

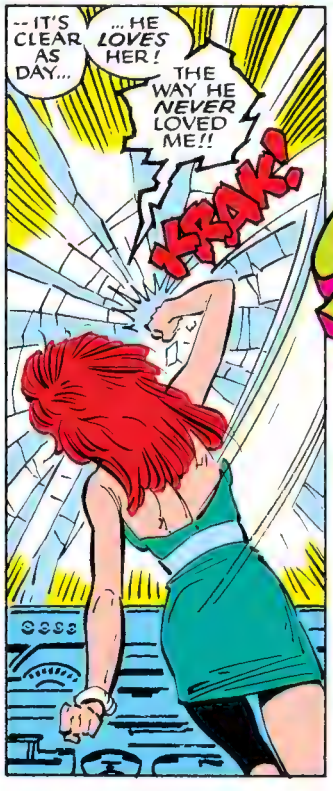

ME, I FEEL RIGHT AT HOME.
SO-- LESSEE-- THE WORLD THINKS THE X-MEN ARE DEAD, CONSIDERS 'EM LEGENDS. BUT THE TEAM NEEDS A SORT OF SIGN, FOR PEOPLE TO REMEMBER 'EM BY AFTER THEIR MISSIONS.
ZORRO HAD HIS "Z," THE LONE RANGER A SILVER BULLET.


Hmmm-- I WONDER--
--LONGSHOT AND DAZZLER BOTH WEAR STARS ON THEIR COSTUMES...
...STARS MEAN THE LAW, THE GOOD GUYS...
...EIGHT POINTS, EIGHT X-MEN...
...DEFINITELY HAS POSSIBILITIES.

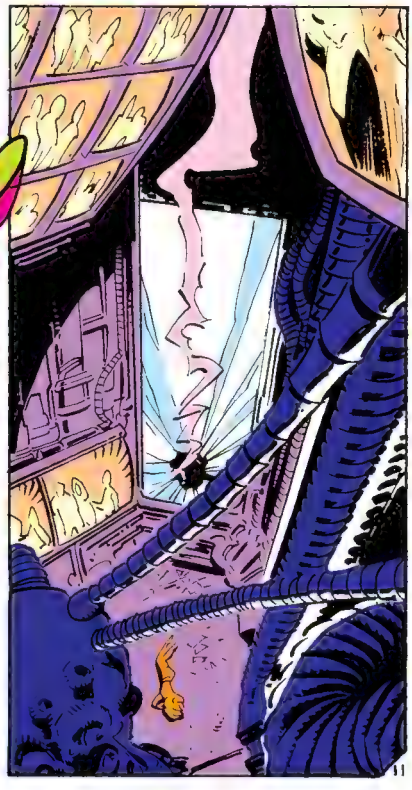
AMAZING SET-UP, THIS. SYSTEMS SO SOPHISTICATED, I CAN TAP INTO ANY COMPUTER-COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK ON EARTH...
...YET SO USER-FRIENDLY IT LITERALLY TAUGHT ME HOW TO USE IT.
AWFULLY CONSIDERATE--

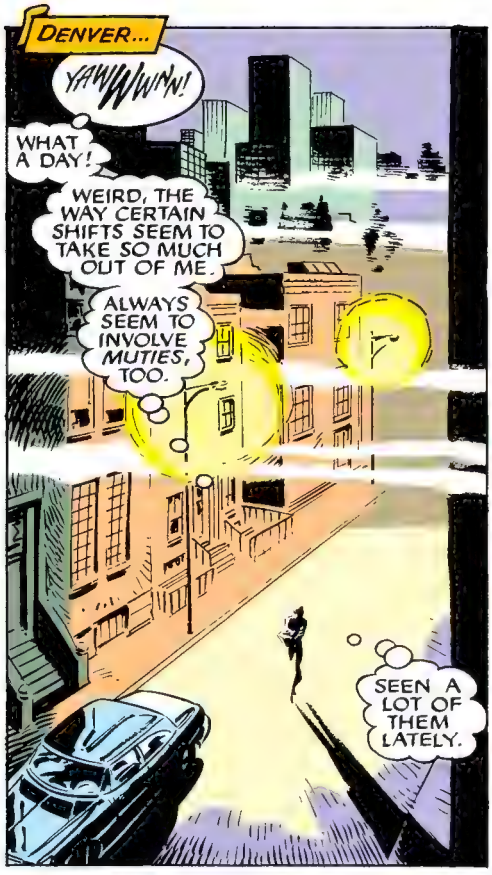

...FOR SOMETHING DESIGNED BY A BAND OF THIEVES AND CUTTHROAT KILLERS.
MAYBE TOO CONSIDERATE--
--WHAT THE?!?
A TV INTERVIEW-- IT'S SCOTT!
AND BESIDE HIM --THAT WOMAN-- SHE'S ME!?!

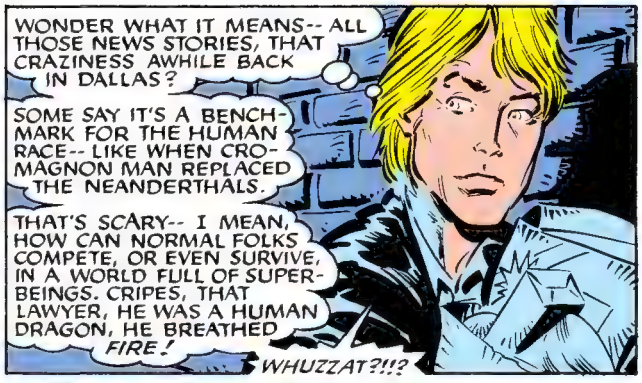

NO!
IT'S MARVEL GIRL-- JEAN GREY-- THE WOMAN HE LOVED BEFORE HE MARRIED ME--
-- BUT SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD!
AND THE WAY THEY'RE STANDING, RELATING TO EACH OTHER-- NO WONDER HE LEFT ME-- AND OUR BABY--

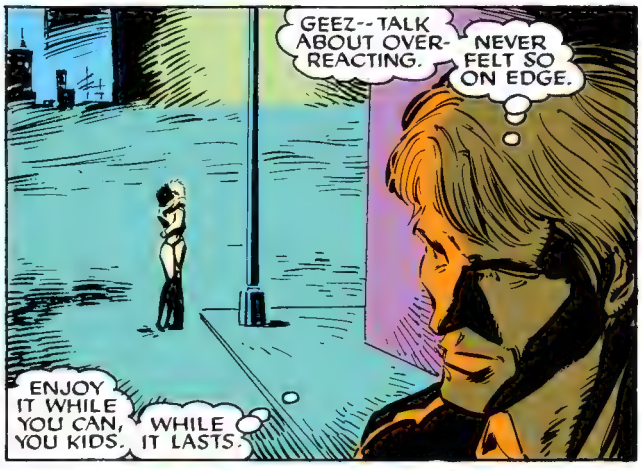

--IT'S CLEAR AS DAY...
...HE LOVES HER!
THE WAY HE NEVER LOVED ME!!
KRAK!

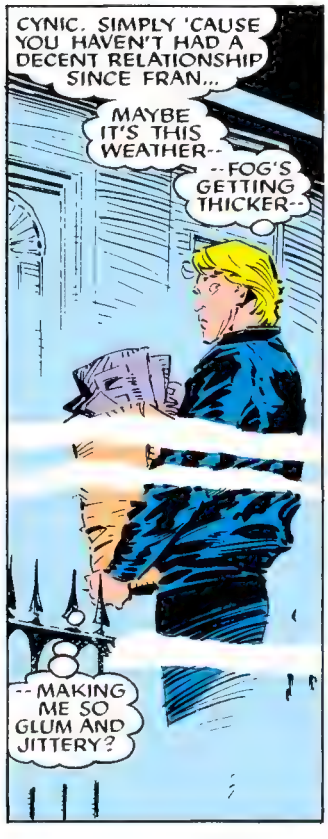
SKBAM!

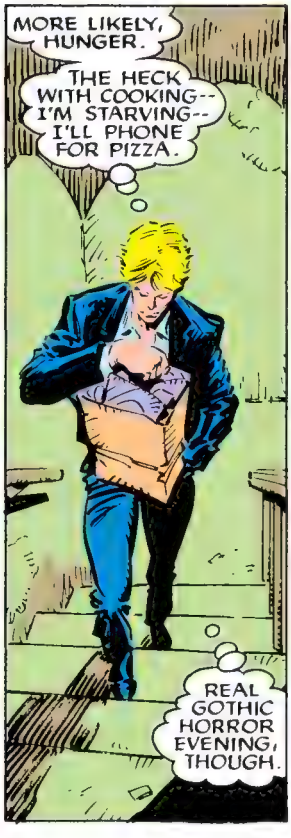


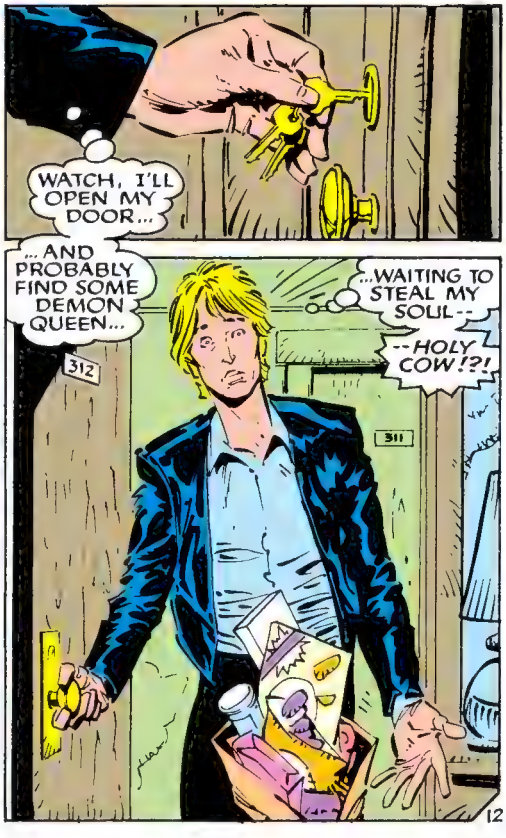

DENVER...
YAWWWN!
WHAT A DAY!
WEIRD, THE WAY CERTAIN SHIFTS SEEM TO TAKE SO MUCH OUT OF ME.
ALWAYS SEEM TO INVOLVE MUTIES, TOO.
SEEN A LOT OF THEM LATELY.

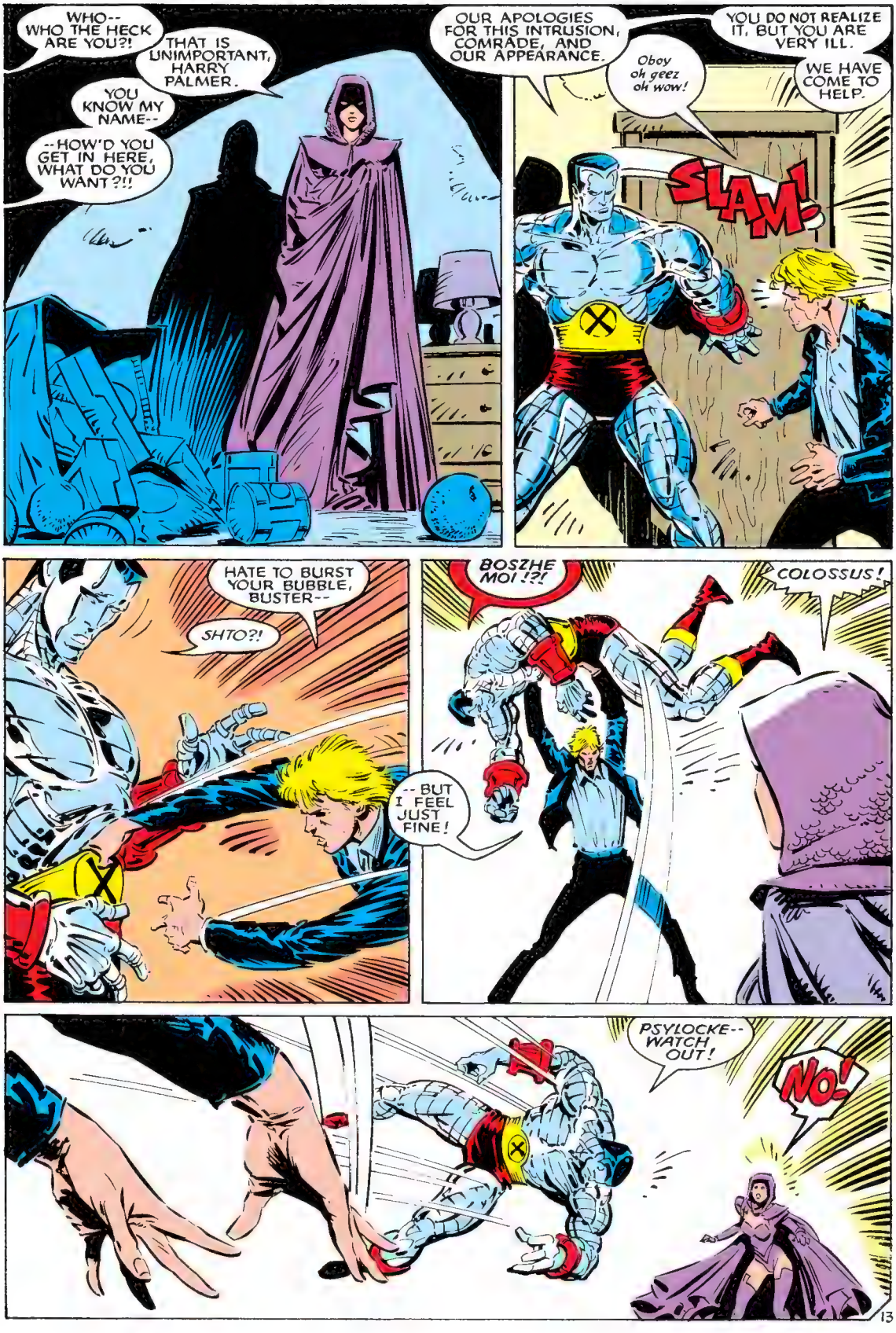

WONDER WHAT IT MEANS-- ALL THOSE NEWS STORIES, THAT CRAZINESS AWHILE BACK IN DALLAS?
SOME SAY IT'S A BENCHMARK FOR THE HUMAN RACE-- LIKE WHEN CRO-MAGNON MAN REPLACED THE NEANDERTHALS.
THAT'S SCARY-- I MEAN, HOW CAN NORMAL FOLKS COMPETE, OR EVEN SURVIVE, IN A WORLD FULL OF SUPER-BEINGS. CRIPES, THAT LAWYER, HE WAS A HUMAN DRAGON, HE BREATHED FIRE!
WHUZZAT?!!?

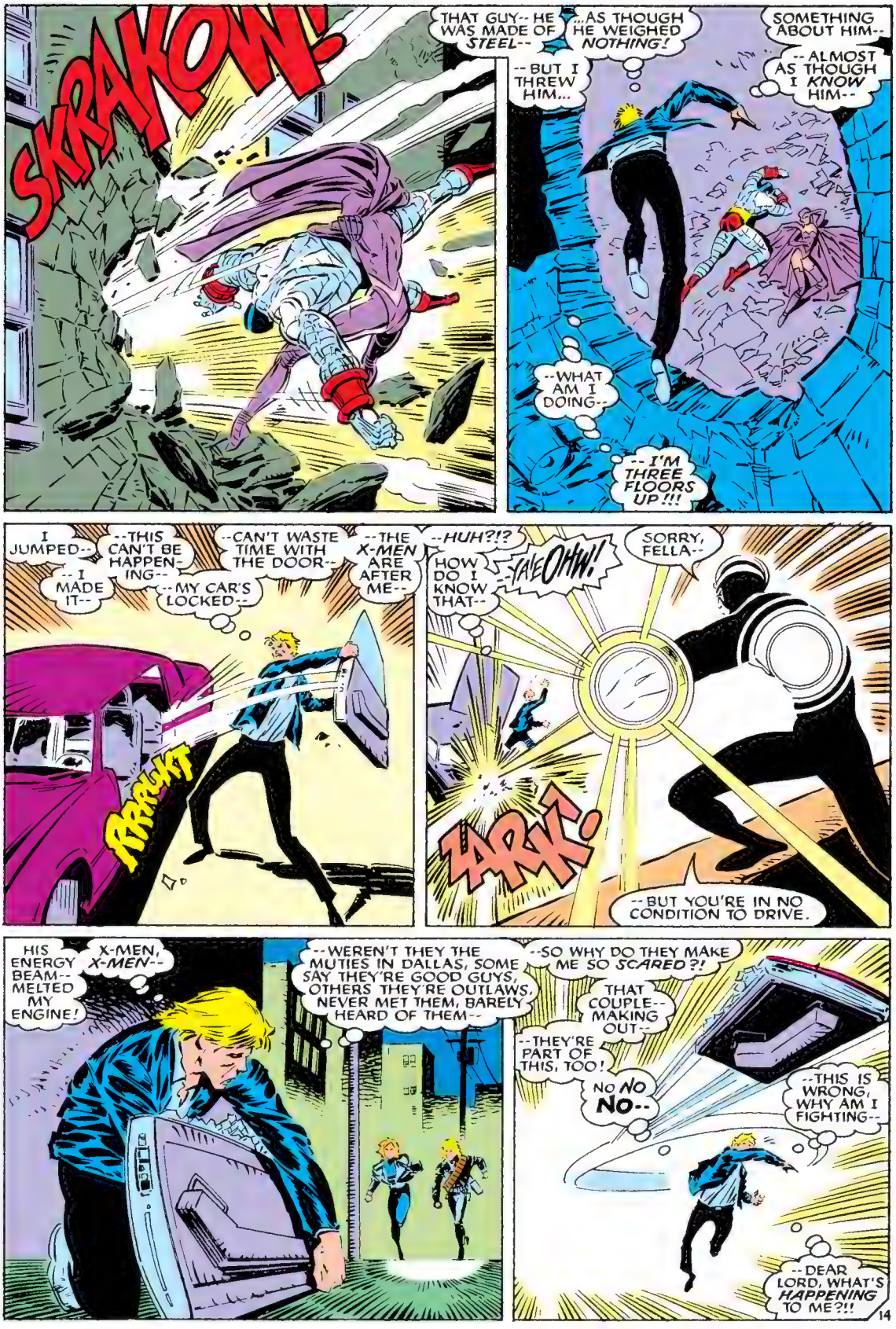

GEEZ-- TALK ABOUT OVER-REACTING.
NEVER FELT SO ON EDGE.
ENJOY IT WHILE YOU CAN, YOU KIDS.
WHILE IT LASTS.

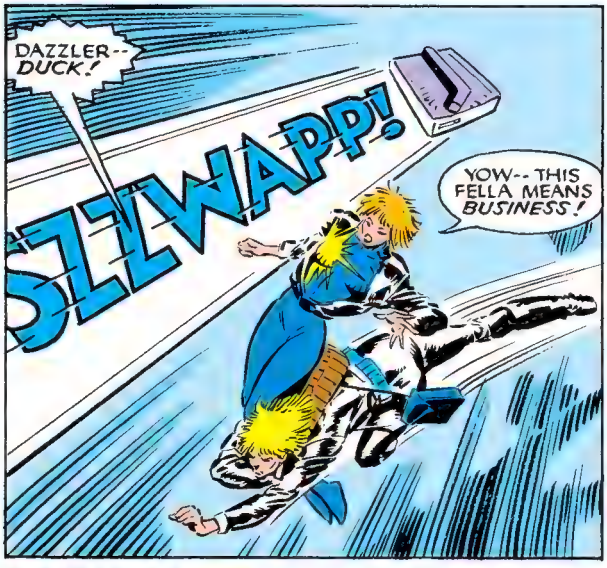

CYNIC. SIMPLY 'CAUSE YOU HAVEN'T HAD A DECENT RELATIONSHIP SINCE FRAN...
MAYBE IT'S THIS WEATHER--
--FOG'S GETTING THICKER--
--MAKING ME SO GLUM AND JITTERY?

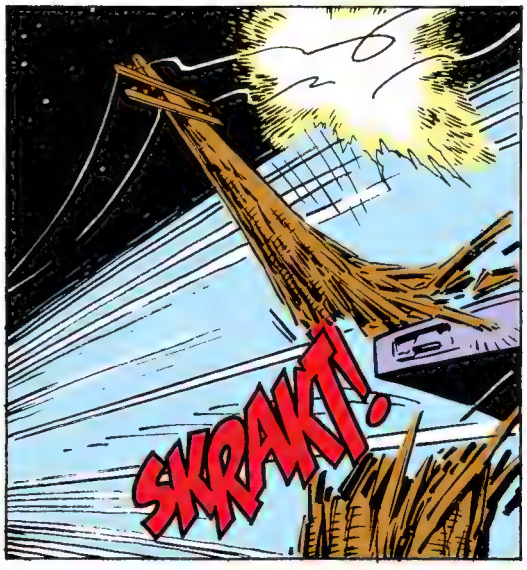

MORE LIKELY, HUNGER.
THE HECK WITH COOKING-- I'M STARVING-- I'LL PHONE FOR PIZZA.
REAL GOTHIC HORROR EVENING, THOUGH.

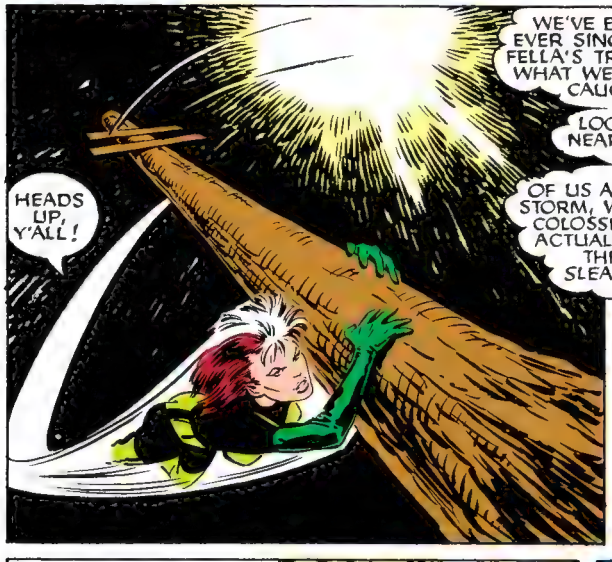

WATCH, I'LL OPEN MY DOOR...
...AND PROBABLY FIND SOME DEMON QUEEN...
...WAITING TO STEAL MY SOUL--
--HOLY COW!?!
312
311

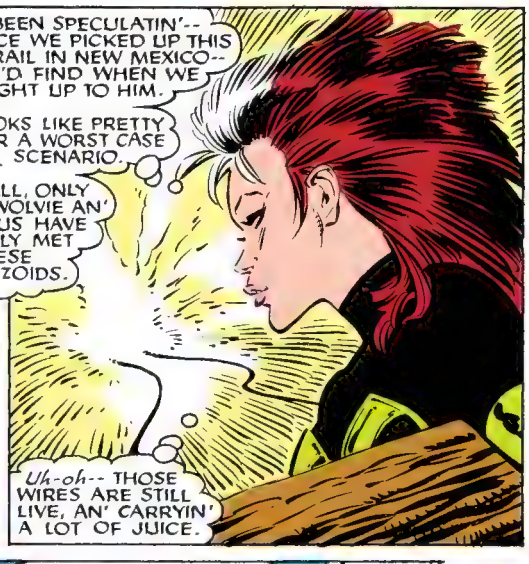

WHO-- WHO THE HECK ARE YOU?!
THAT IS UNIMPORTANT, HARRY PALMER.
YOU KNOW MY NAME--
--HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE, WHAT DO YOU WANT?!!
OUR APOLOGIES FOR THIS INTRUSION, COMRADE, AND OUR APPEARANCE.
YOU DO NOT REALIZE IT, BUT YOU ARE VERY ILL.
WE HAVE COME TO HELP.
Oboy oh geez oh wow!
SLAM!
HATE TO BURST YOUR BUBBLE, BUSTER--
SHTO?!
-- BUT I FEEL JUST FINE!
BOSZHE MOI!?!
COLOSSUS!
PSYLOCKE-- WATCH OUT!
NO!

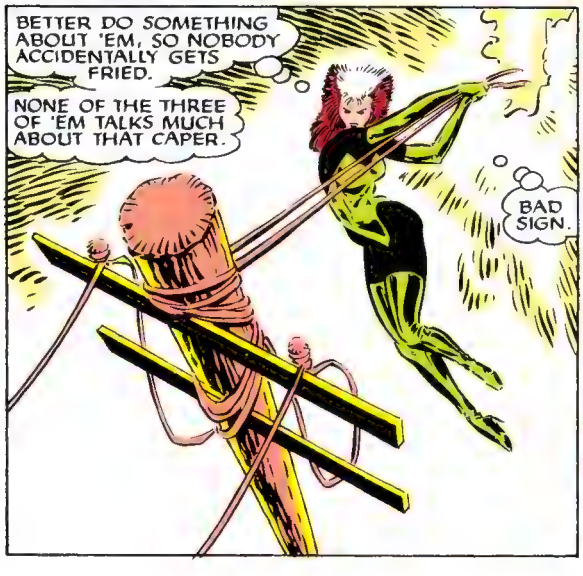

SKRAKOW!
THAT GUY-- HE WAS MADE OF STEEL--
...AS THOUGH HE WEIGHED NOTHING!
SOMETHING ABOUT HIM--
--BUT I THREW HIM...
--ALMOST AS THOUGH I KNOW HIM--
--WHAT AM I DOING--
--I'M THREE FLOORS UP!!!
I JUMPED--
--I MADE IT--
--THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING--
--CAN'T WASTE TIME WITH THE DOOR--
--MY CAR'S LOCKED--
--THE X-MEN ARE AFTER ME--
ARRACKT
--HUH?!?
HOW DO I KNOW THAT--
YAKOHW!
SORRY, FELLA--
ZARK!
--BUT YOU'RE IN NO CONDITION TO DRIVE.
HIS ENERGY BEAM-- MELTED MY ENGINE!
X-MEN, X-MEN--
--WEREN'T THEY THE MUTIES IN DALLAS, SOME SAY THEY'RE GOOD GUYS, OTHERS THEY'RE OUTLAWS, NEVER MET THEM, BARELY HEARD OF THEM--
--SO WHY DO THEY MAKE ME SO SCARED?!
THAT COUPLE-- MAKING OUT--
--THEY'RE PART OF THIS, TOO!
NO NO NO--
--THIS IS WRONG, WHY AM I FIGHTING--
--DEAR LORD, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?!!

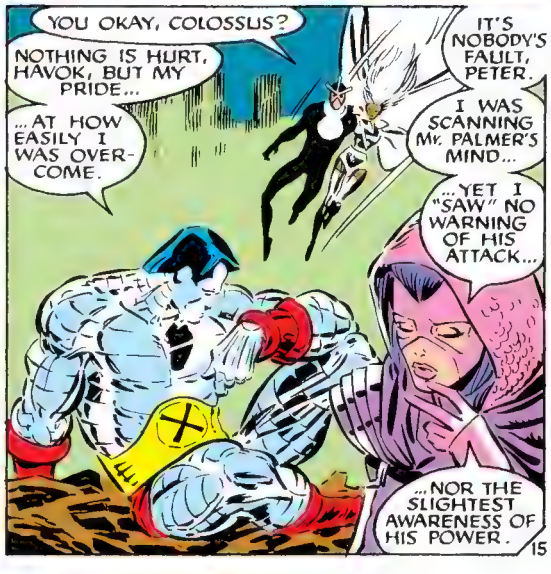

DAZZLER-- DUCK!
SZZWAPP!
YOW-- THIS FELLA MEANS BUSINESS!

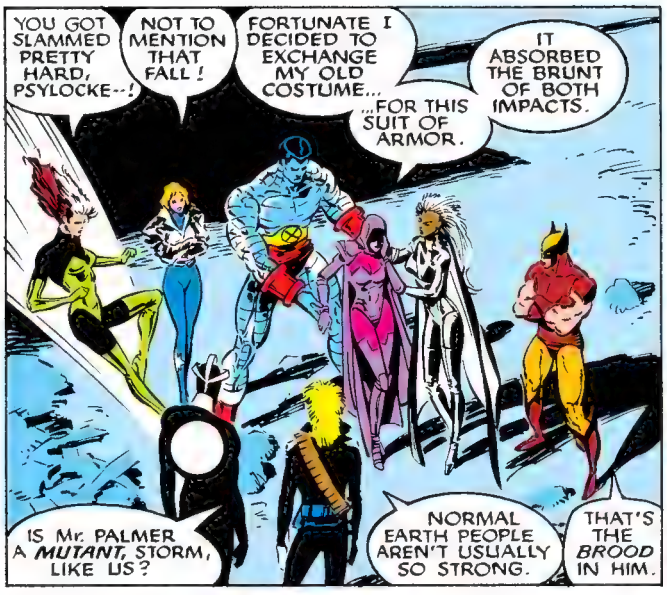

SKRAKT!


HEADS UP, Y'ALL!


WE'VE BEEN SPECULATIN'-- EVER SINCE WE PICKED UP THIS FELLA'S TRAIL IN NEW MEXICO-- WHAT WE'D FIND WHEN WE CAUGHT UP TO HIM.
LOOKS LIKE PRETTY NEAR A WORST CASE SCENARIO.
OF US ALL, ONLY STORM, WOLVIE AN' COLOSSUS HAVE ACTUALLY MET THESE SLEAZOIDS.
Uh-oh-- THOSE WIRES ARE STILL LIVE, AN' CARRYIN' A LOT OF JUICE.

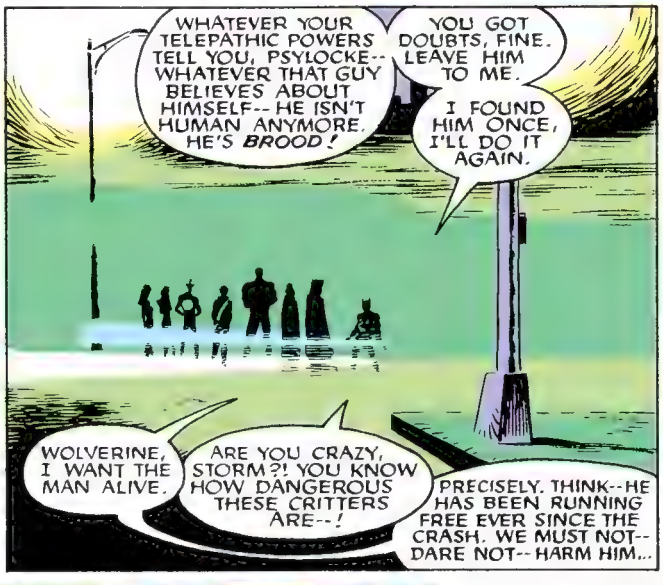

BETTER DO SOMETHING ABOUT 'EM, SO NOBODY ACCIDENTALLY GETS FRIED.
NONE OF THE THREE OF 'EM TALKS MUCH ABOUT THAT CAPER.
BAD SIGN.

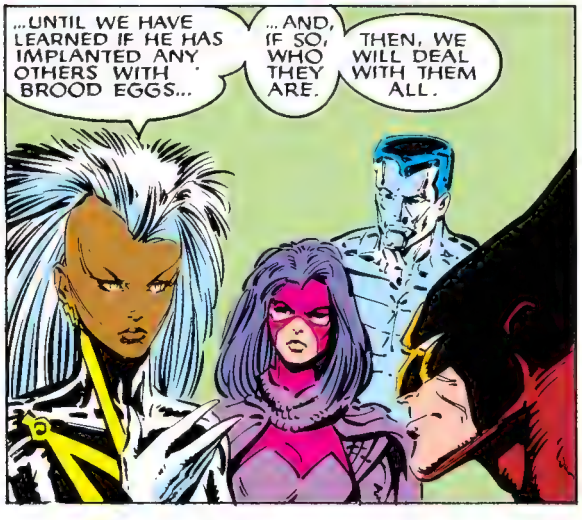

YOU OKAY, COLOSSUS?
NOTHING IS HURT, HAVOK, BUT MY PRIDE...
...AT HOW EASILY I WAS OVER-COME.
IT'S NOBODY'S FAULT, PETER.
I WAS SCANNING Mr. PALMER'S MIND...
...YET I "SAW" NO WARNING OF HIS ATTACK...
...NOR THE SLIGHTEST AWARENESS OF HIS POWER.

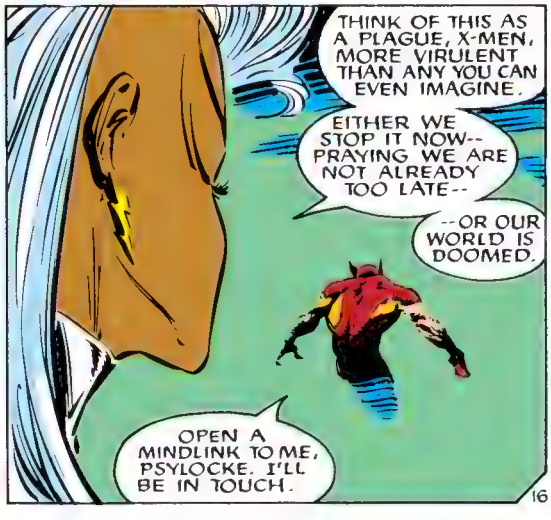

YOU GOT SLAMMED PRETTY HARD, PSYLOCKE--!
NOT TO MENTION THAT FALL!
FORTUNATE I DECIDED TO EXCHANGE MY OLD COSTUME...
...FOR THIS SUIT OF ARMOR.
IT ABSORBED THE BRUNT OF BOTH IMPACTS.
IS Mr. PALMER A *MUTANT*, STORM, LIKE US?
NORMAL EARTH PEOPLE AREN'T USUALLY SO STRONG.
THAT'S THE *BROOD* IN HIM.

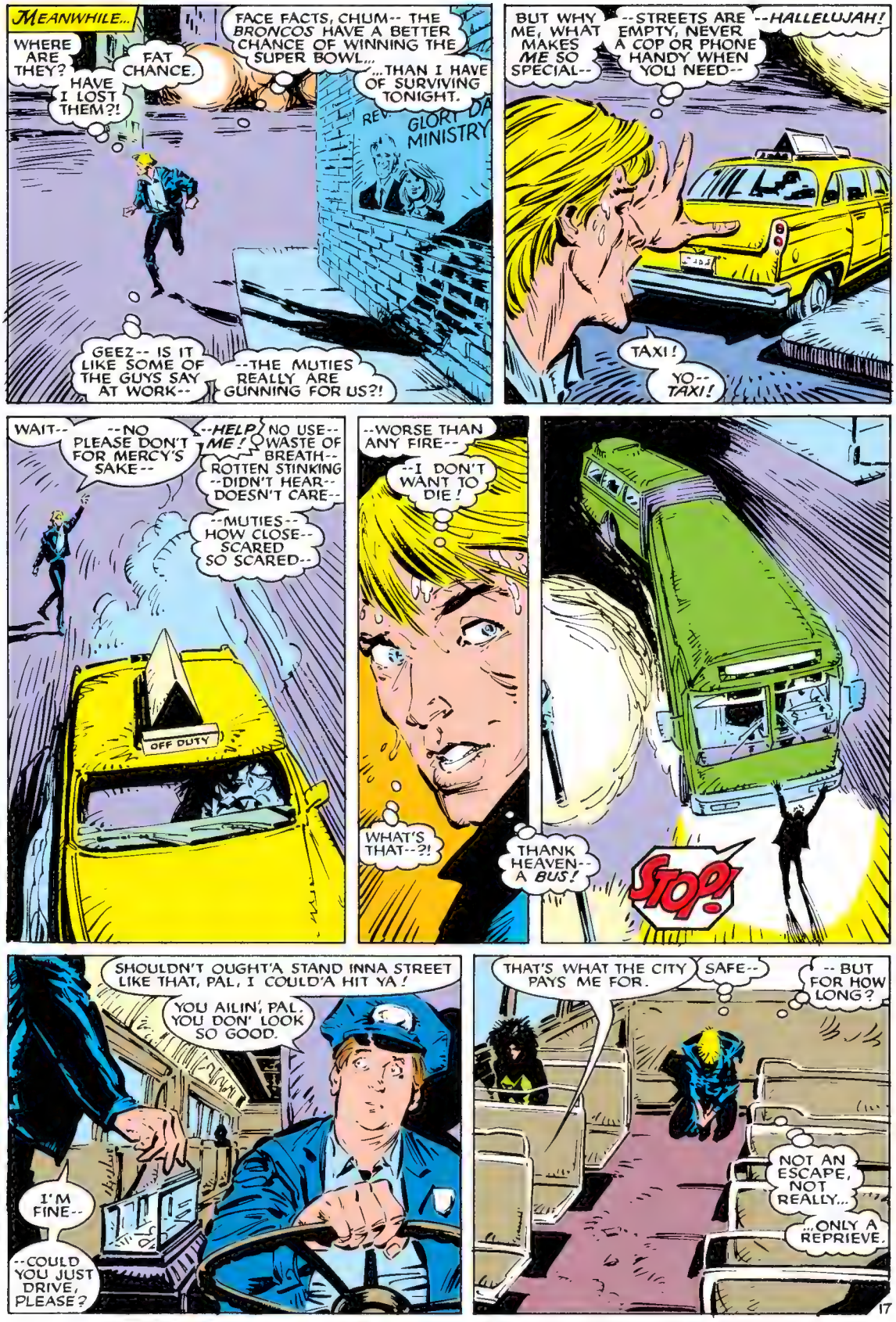
IF SO WOLVERINE, THE MAN HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF IT.
MY FRIENDS-- COULD LONGSHOT BE RIGHT? ARE WE MAKING A TERRIBLE MISTAKE, BY HOUNDING AN INNOCENT MAN?
TRUST ME, DARLIN'.

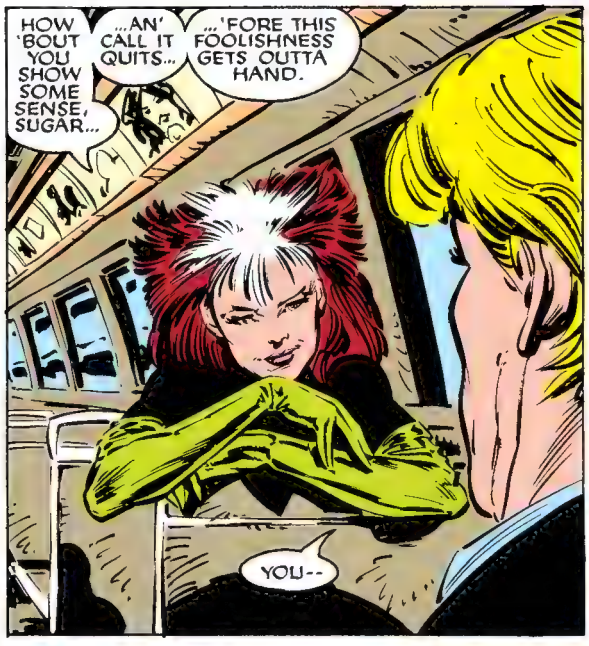
PALMER WAS INFECTED AT THE CRASH SITE IN NEW MEXICO-- I SPOTTED THAT THE MOMENT I TAGGED HIS SCENT.
AN OLD SCENT, WOLVERINE. CAN YOU TRULY BE CERTAIN?
I'M CERTAIN.


WHATEVER YOUR TELEPATHIC POWERS TELL YOU, PSYLOCKE-- WHATEVER THAT GUY BELIEVES ABOUT HIMSELF-- HE ISN'T HUMAN ANYMORE. HE'S *BROOD!*
YOU GOT DOUBTS, FINE. LEAVE HIM TO ME.
I FOUND HIM ONCE, I'LL DO IT AGAIN.
WOLVERINE, I WANT THE MAN ALIVE.
ARE YOU CRAZY, STORM?! YOU KNOW HOW DANGEROUS THESE CRITTERS ARE--!
PRECISELY. THINK--HE HAS BEEN RUNNING FREE EVER SINCE THE CRASH. WE MUST NOT-- DARE NOT-- HARM HIM...


...UNTIL WE HAVE LEARNED IF HE HAS IMPLANTED ANY OTHERS WITH BROOD EGGS...
...AND, IF SO, WHO THEY ARE.
THEN, WE WILL DEAL WITH THEM ALL.


THINK OF THIS AS A PLAGUE, X-MEN, MORE VIRULENT THAN ANY YOU CAN EVEN IMAGINE.
EITHER WE STOP IT NOW-- PRAYING WE ARE NOT ALREADY TOO LATE--
--OR OUR WORLD IS DOOMED.
OPEN A MINDLINK TO ME, PSYLOCKE. I'LL BE IN TOUCH.

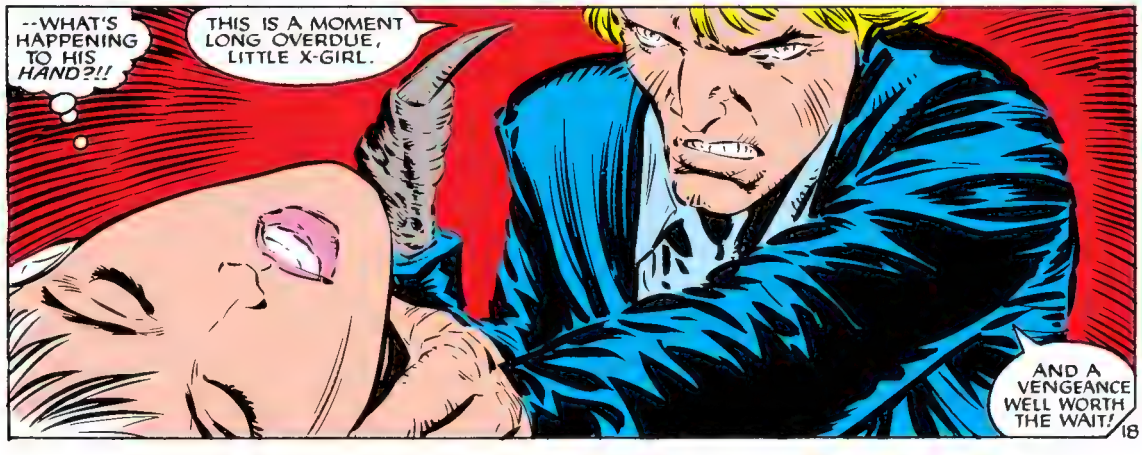

MEANWHILE...
WHERE ARE THEY?
HAVE I LOST THEM?!
FAT CHANCE.
FACE FACTS, CHUM-- THE BRONCOS HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF WINNING THE SUPER BOWL...
...THAN I HAVE OF SURVIVING TONIGHT.
GLORY DA MINISTRY
GEEZ-- IS IT LIKE SOME OF THE GUYS SAY AT WORK--
--THE MUTIES REALLY ARE GUNNING FOR US?!
BUT WHY ME, WHAT MAKES ME SO SPECIAL--
--STREETS ARE EMPTY, NEVER A COP OR PHONE HANDY WHEN YOU NEED--
--HALLELUJAH!
TAXI!
YO-- TAXI!
WAIT--
--NO PLEASE DON'T FOR MERCY'S SAKE--
--HELP ME!
NO USE-- WASTE OF BREATH-- ROTTEN STINKING --DIDN'T HEAR-- DOESN'T CARE--
--MUTIES-- HOW CLOSE-- SCARED SO SCARED--
OFF DUTY
--WORSE THAN ANY FIRE--
--I DON'T WANT TO DIE!
WHAT'S THAT--?!
THANK HEAVEN-- A BUS!
STOP!
SHOULDN'T OUGHT'A STAND INNA STREET LIKE THAT, PAL, I COULD'A HIT YA!
YOU AILIN', PAL. YOU DON' LOOK SO GOOD.
I'M FINE--
--COULD YOU JUST DRIVE, PLEASE?
THAT'S WHAT THE CITY PAYS ME FOR.
SAFE--
-- BUT FOR HOW LONG?
NOT AN ESCAPE, NOT REALLY...
...ONLY A REPRIEVE.

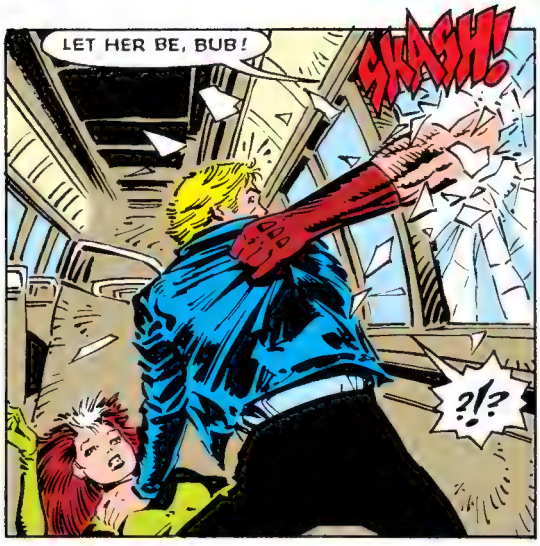

HOW 'BOUT YOU SHOW SOME SENSE, SUGAR...
...AN' CALL IT QUITS...
...'FORE THIS FOOLISHNESS GETS OUTTA HAND.
YOU--

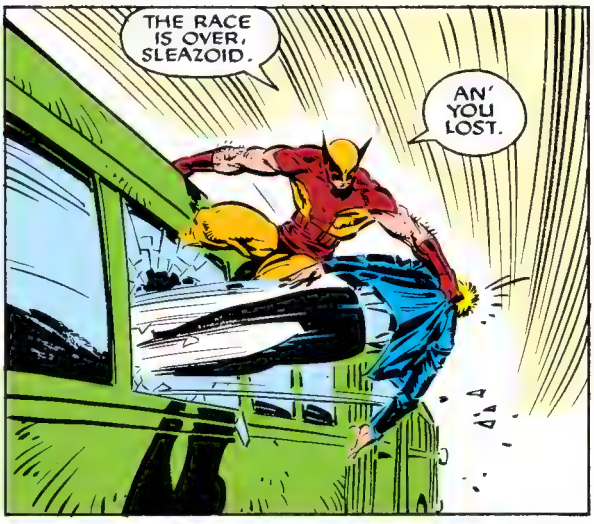
--YOU'RE ONE OF THEM!
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY OR DO, MUTANT--

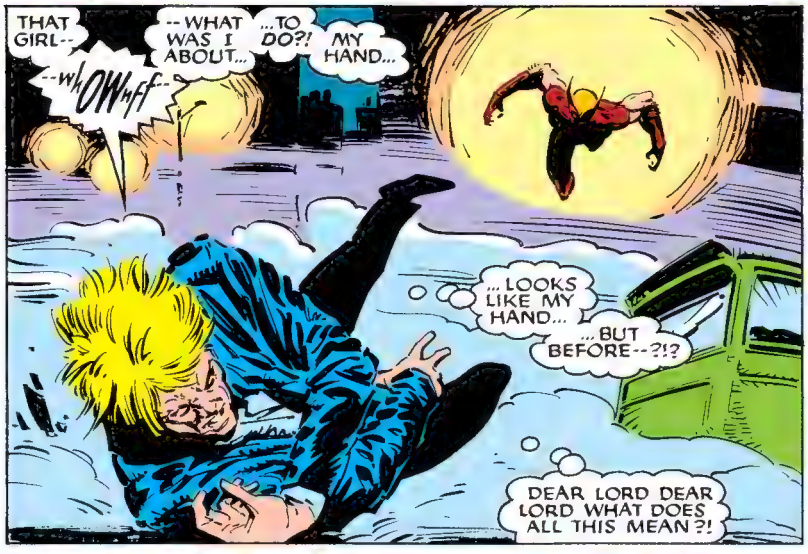
-- I WON'T LET YOU GET ME!
Yaiohwhh!
SO FAST--
--BAD BAD MOVE--
-- FIGURED AH COULD HANDLE HIM--
-- BUT NOW HE'S GOT LEVERAGE--

--AN' HE'S TOO STRONG--
--CAN'T THROW HIM OFF!
GLORY-- HIS HAND--


--WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HIS HAND?!!
THIS IS A MOMENT LONG OVERDUE, LITTLE X-GIRL.
AND A VENGEANCE WELL WORTH THE WAIT!


LET HER BE, BUB!
SKASH!
?!?

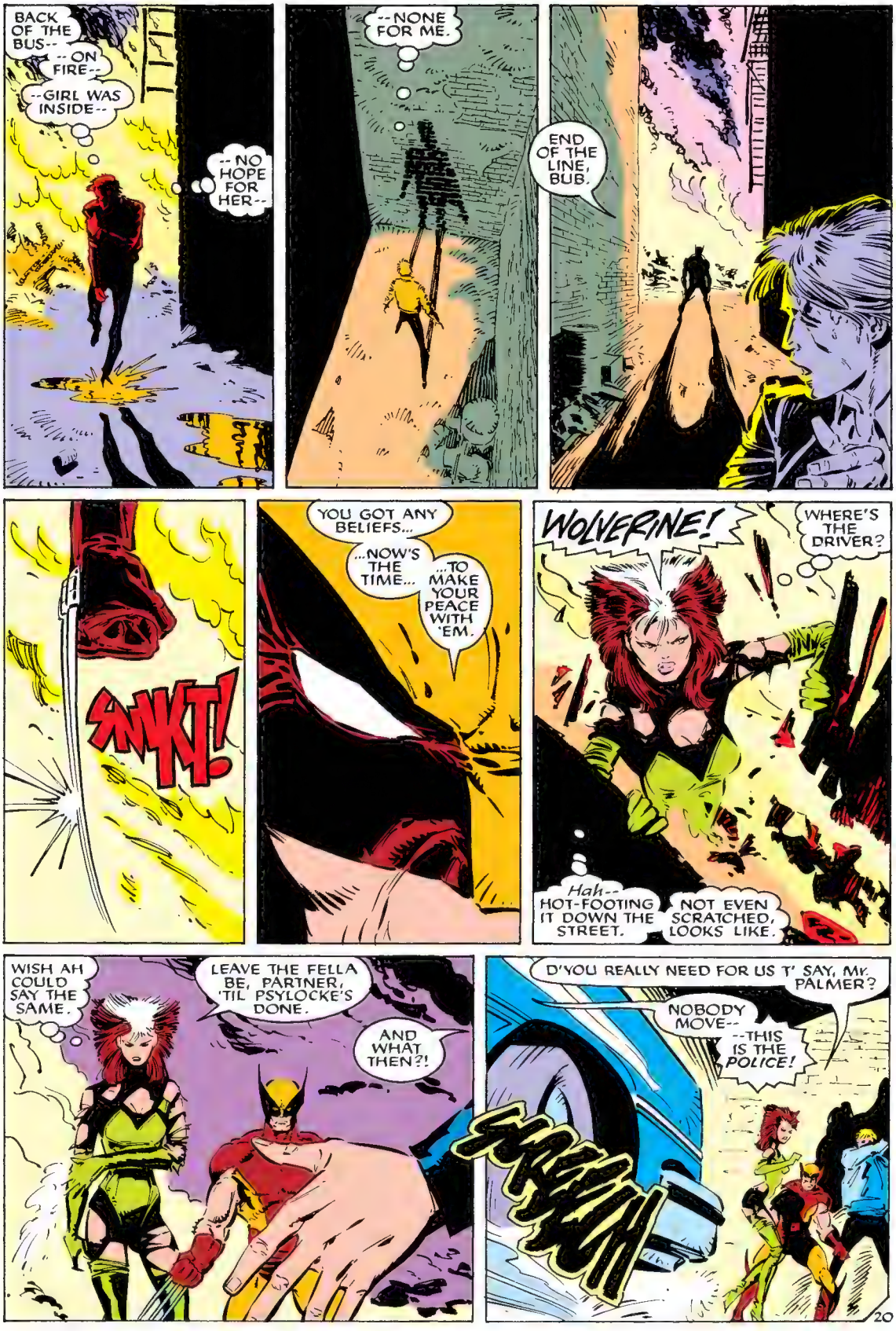

THE RACE IS OVER, SLEAZOID.
AN' YOU LOST.

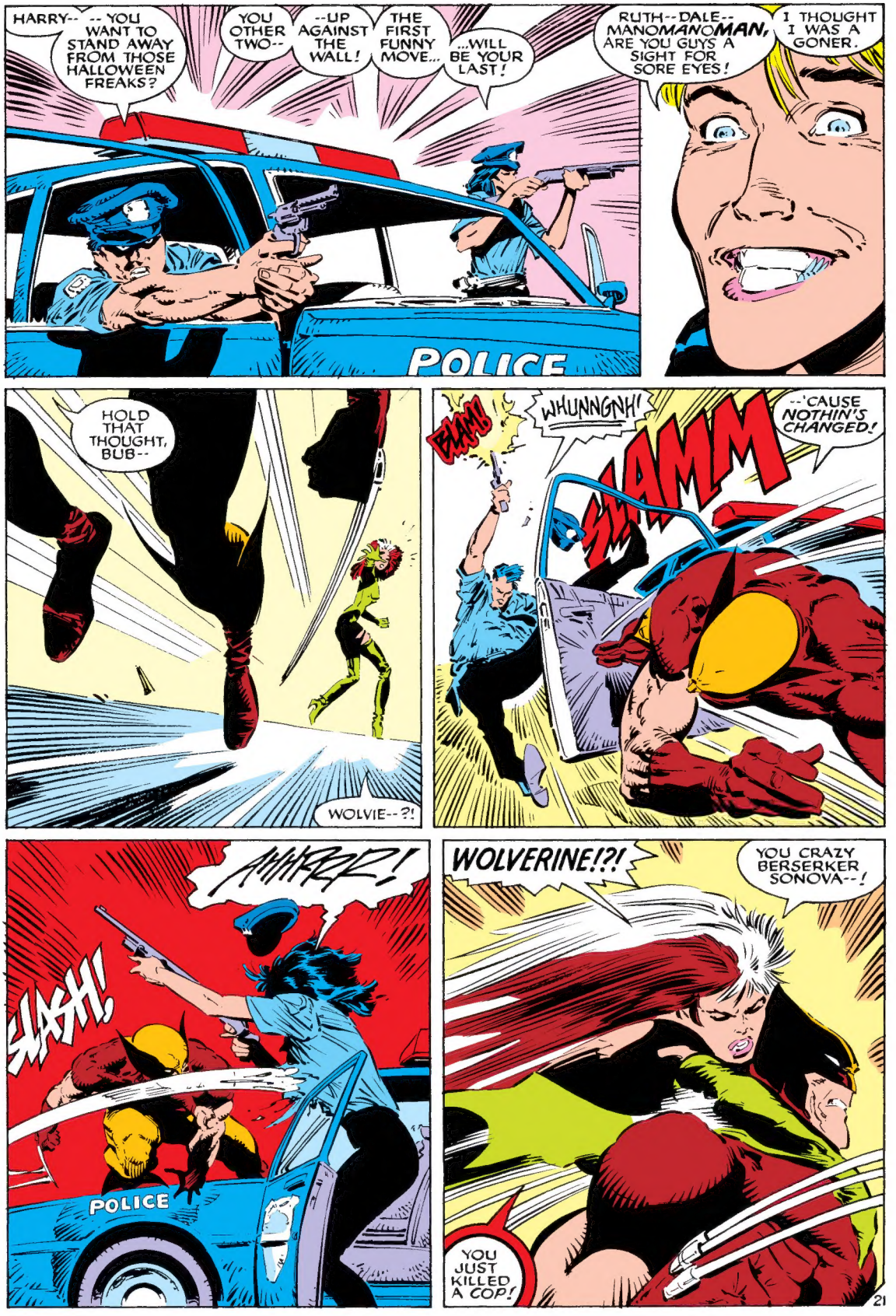

THAT GIRL--
--WHAT WAS I ABOUT...
...TO DO?!
MY HAND...
--WHOWHFF--
...LOOKS LIKE MY HAND...
...BUT BEFORE--?!?
DEAR LORD DEAR LORD WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?!

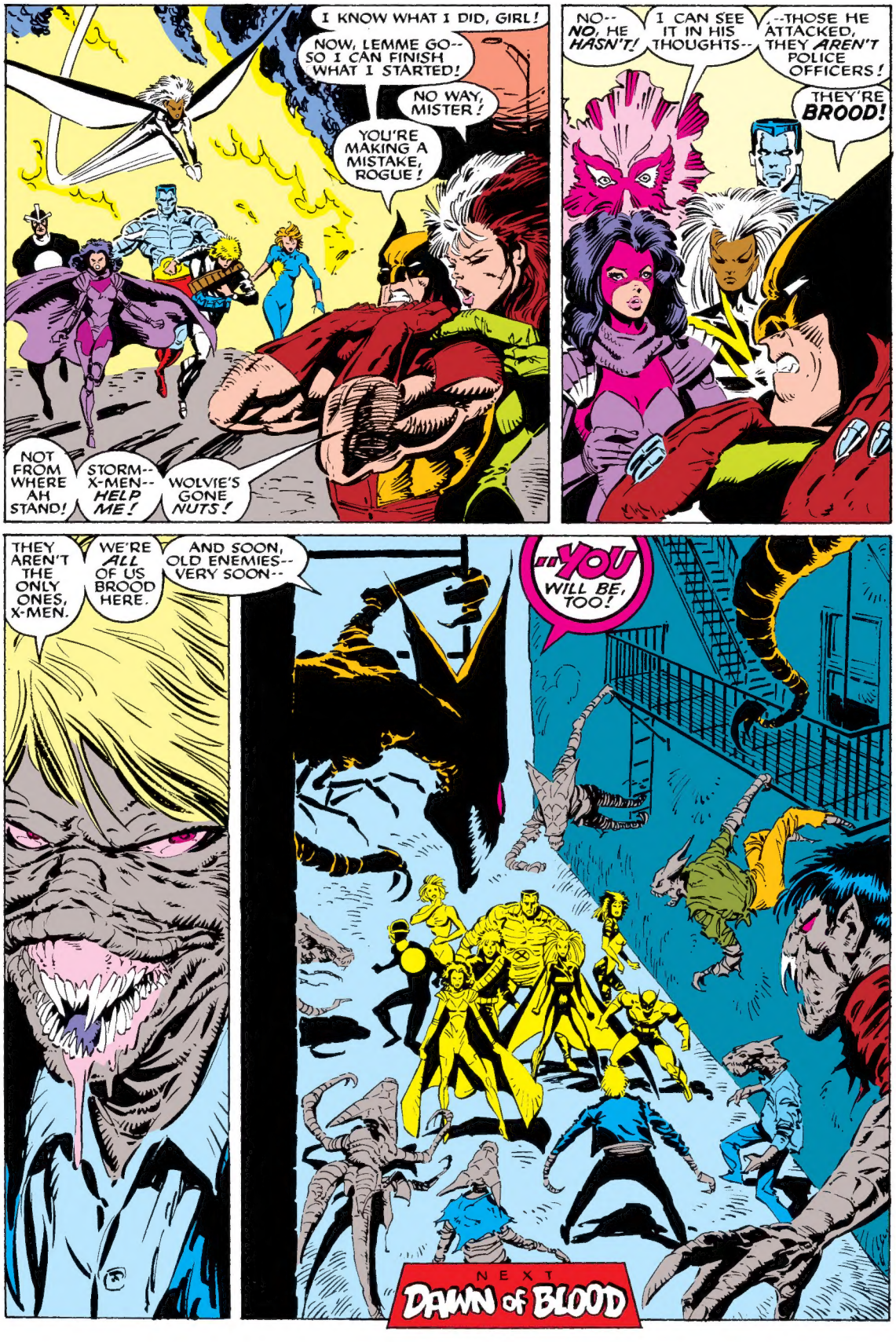
SOME SORT'A FIGHT--
--CRAZY PEOPLE INNA FIGHT--
-- HEARD THAT GUY YELL, "MUTIE"--
--GETTIN' OUTTA HERE, PRONTO!

BUS-- GOIN' TOO FAST--
--BRAKES AIN'T HOLDIN'--
--SHE WON'T MAKE THE CORNER!
SCREEE

BWHOOM


BACK OF THE BUS--
--ON FIRE--
--GIRL WAS INSIDE--
--NO HOPE FOR HER--
--NONE FOR ME.
END OF THE LINE, BUB.
SNAKT!
YOU GOT ANY BELIEFS...
...NOW'S THE TIME...
...TO MAKE YOUR PEACE WITH 'EM.
WOLVERINE!
WHERE'S THE DRIVER?
Hah--
HOT-FOOTING IT DOWN THE STREET.
NOT EVEN SCRATCHED, LOOKS LIKE.
WISH AH COULD SAY THE SAME.
LEAVE THE FELLA BE, PARTNER, 'TIL PSYLOCKE'S DONE.
AND WHAT THEN?!
D'YOU REALLY NEED FOR US T' SAY, Mr. PALMER?
NOBODY MOVE--
--THIS IS THE POLICE!
SCREECH


HARRY--
-- YOU WANT TO STAND AWAY FROM THOSE HALLOWEEN FREAKS?
YOU OTHER TWO--
--UP AGAINST THE WALL!
THE FIRST FUNNY MOVE...
...WILL BE YOUR LAST!
POLICE
RUTH--DALE--MANOMANOMAN, ARE YOU GUYS A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!
I THOUGHT I WAS A GONER.
HOLD THAT THOUGHT, BUB--
WOLVIE--?!
BLAM!
WHUNNGNH!
SLAMM
--'CAUSE NOTHIN'S CHANGED!
AWRRR!
SLASH!
POLICE
WOLVERINE!?!
YOU CRAZY BERSERKER SONOVA--!
YOU JUST KILLED A COP!


I KNOW WHAT I DID, GIRL!
NOW, LEMME GO-- SO I CAN FINISH WHAT I STARTED!
NO WAY, MISTER!
YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE, ROGUE!
NOT FROM WHERE AH STAND!
STORM-- X-MEN-- HELP ME!
WOLVIE'S GONE NUTS!
NO-- NO, HE HASN'T!
I CAN SEE IT IN HIS THOUGHTS--
--THOSE HE ATTACKED, THEY AREN'T POLICE OFFICERS!
THEY'RE BROOD!
THEY AREN'T THE ONLY ONES, X-MEN.
WE'RE ALL OF US BROOD HERE.
AND SOON, OLD ENEMIES-- VERY SOON--
...YOU WILL BE, TOO!
NEXT
DAWN of BLOOD

X-MAIL

BOB HARRAS: editor
DARYL EDELMAN: assistant editor
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387 Park Avenue South—New York, New York—10016
Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear X-Folks,

I just read X-MEN #222. All I have to say is this — #221 and #222 are more like it. Tense excitement, action, drama, inner conflicts, and indications of Wolverine's changes. In #222, on page 19, I would've finished off Sabre right there. I'm glad that Rogue and Dazzler are getting along together finally. I think that having Wolverine as the leader is the best storyline that Chris has come up with since the Phoenix saga! Perfect. He seems to be doing an excellent job of it, and he should. After all, he was a commando, right? About Havok — I hope he doesn't go nuts and berserk and want to kill the Marauders like his brother did. The part with Storm proved interesting. I hope she gets her powers back but, this time, don't have her emotions echoed in the weather around her. That was stupid, Chris. And what I don't understand is, if the Marauders are supposed to be so rough and tough, how come the X-MEN seem their equals? I mean, if Wolverine's healing talent wasn't scrambled on page 18, he would've killed Sabretooth, Scalphunter, and Scrambler, no problem. One other thing, Chris — one of the things that has made THE X-MEN what it is is the realism. It's starting to slip a little. Please, don't let this happen.

Now what would I like to see? Wolverine remain leader forever and reveal his past. At least tell us who gave him his bones. Change Magneto's costume. I agree, it's ugly. Bring back Kitty, Kurt, and Peter. C'mon, guys. Let's see the X-MEN use some teamwork. After seeing what happened on the bridge on page 18, you should have Wolvie train Longshot in fighting. Skill and luck are what the X-Men need most now, and Longshot has plenty of it. Reveal Nightcrawler's past. I'm assuming that whatever Kurt and Wolvie's pasts hold, it must be as unpleasant as it is important. Right, guys?

Well, thanks for listening to my comments.

Andrew Vungaro
West Seneca, NY

X-Folks,

After reading the past few issues of X-MEN (#223 being the last), I had a few comments and questions for you. One of the best things about this book is that the characters, for better or worse, seem to continuously change. However, I can't say that all the changes have been good, and while I still like the X-Men, I wouldn't particularly want to be friends with them. Psylocke, especially, seems to have become much more grim, ruthless, and cold-hearted. I first met her in the NEW MUTANTS ANNUAL #2, and really liked the way she came across. (Say, whatever happened to what Betsy and Doug felt for each other? And why do the X-Men and New Mutants never seem to run into each other at the mansion?) But now she comes across, at least to me, rather like an iron-hearted witch.

And now to say some nice things. Storm is finally on a Quest (as opposed to merely a quest) to restore her lost powers, and about time, I say. I believe that I'm finally beginning to like the way she looks, too. While she is as cold as Psylocke, as team leader she should be, and I can . . . appreciate it. As long as we're talking about the female members of the team, I should point out my pleasure at seeing Dazzler and Rogue reconciled. By the by, is Rogue being groomed to be leader some day?

Other nice things, and maybe a few more criticisms, also. Okay, everybody who hopes that Wolverine killed Sabretooth in #222, raise your hand (have you ever noticed how hard it is to type one-handed?). Now all those who think he did, raise a hand. (Ahh . . . much easier.) Longshot needs more of a personality than curiousity and friendship. I like Alex Summers — I always have. It occurs to me that he might be a little more upset with his teammates — if they hadn't messed with his mind he would have remembered the Marauders earlier and I doubt that he would have left Lorna alone in the desert to face a group of killers that don't like super-powered mutants. Because of his teammates, Alex may have lost the woman he loves. I know that I'd be a tad unhappy with the ones who had caused this by their deceptions.

Eric E. Nevis
Gainesville, FL.

Dear X-Staff,

To have looked at me in the comic book shop, one might have thought my heart's desire was to read Marvel Comics, and become a statue ala Alex Summers. Though I haven't done so in a long time, I bought a comic book, THE X-MEN ANNUAL #11. I was impressed by Chris Claremont's story. It's been done before — some hero turning down ultimate power, ultimate knowledge, immortality, whatever — but somehow this cast moved me enough to buy the thing and figure out why I was so moved.

I thought about what it meant, all those times somebody turned down one of those ultimate or infinite whatevers. Implicit in the rejection is the character's deep understanding of self and place in the universe — that power or knowledge or whatever acquired instantly or through some gimmicky device (a Cosmic Cube or Super Crystal) is not a free ride. There's always a catch if one does not know the mechanism by which one is granted such gifts. Wolverine (appropriately) saw his godhood as denying beings their free will. Yes, and I would add that as mankind evolves to Watcher status, it will learn crucial lessons that will enable it to use its powers wisely. Perhaps Wolverine recognized that he had not yet developed the wisdom necessary to truly be a god, but he did have enough to reject being one. I like that moral, and I'm glad such a value is being implicity spread to your readership.

After thinking about that, I started to think about why it made sense for Wolverine to be the one to make such a choice. Why not one of the others? How did they fall? I was unfamiliar with Rogue, but what I found out was enough to justify her fate. Someone untouched by human warmth will of course crave it so badly that she will jump at the chance to get it. And Alex craves, not Lorna Dane, simply to free himself from constantly being in control? Yes, I'll buy that. I've always liked Alex (being a little brother myself) but please don't let him wallow too deeply in self-pity. His struggle for self-control seems much more terrible than Scott's, who can at least put on a pair of glasses. I hope you continue to find interesting ways to have him mature as a character, for this, "Oh-my-gosh-I-have-to-be-in-control-all-the-time" bit can only go on so long.

And thank you for giving so much room to Alison's fate. That sequence had such a nice human touch. Your portrayal of her as having this horrendous problem deciding what to do, and then taking responsiblity for her decision was very real to me. As someone who's on his second time around in graduate school, in a different field, I could empathize with her. Some of my friends have this all-too-human feeling of not knowing what to do.

Except for Longshot (I still don't know quite what to make of him as a character, or what happened to him, but there is a consistency about him that I won't deny, and I like what I do see), the others seem to be deeply at odds with what they are, which is the stuff of great human stories. All the others, save Psylocke and Wolverine. Wolverine, too, has been deeply developed so that, even though he is what he wants to be, there are still deep conflicts in his soul, which is great. However, you're going to have to do something with Psylocke if she's to be at all as interesting as the others. Anyway, it makes sense that Wolverine should be the one to make the choice for humanity — he was the one most secure with who he is, the most mature, the one who's had the most experience with life. And no, it wasn't easy for him, but he did it. It fit. Storm comes in a close second, but she still needs to work out her desires to indulge herself, which Wolverine evidently has. Scott and Alex will never be able to cut loose the way Wolverine has — getting drunk, partying, etc. Does that mean they'll never be able to reach the level of maturity Wolverine has?

As I looked closely at panels, I became more and more impressed by how each character's personality was revealed by their pose — Storm, straight and tall, Alison, pensive, Longshot, tentative, yet curious and anxious to help, and so on. Hey, I thought, this shows a greater degree of sophistication than I'd been aware of before. And this complex story was told in a well-paced, carefully chosen sequence of scenes. Wow!

Anyway, it looks like I'll at least be buying more of THE X-MEN.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS: Next month, the Brood confront the X-Men again at last! But even as her compatriots battle for their lives in Denver, Madelyne Pryor receives a visit from a mysterious and dangerous stranger — a visit that will forever change the course of her life. Meanwhile, in X-FACTOR #31, on sale next week, Destiny gives Jean Grey and Cyclops much needed information on the location of Scott's and Maddie's baby, while the Beast makes the ultimate sacrifice to save the life of Iceman. And, in NEW MUTANTS #68, the kids race off into deepest space to rescue Lila Cheney from the clutches of the decadent Spyder! Do yourself a favor, friends, check 'em *all* out!

MINUTEMEN
Bluntman